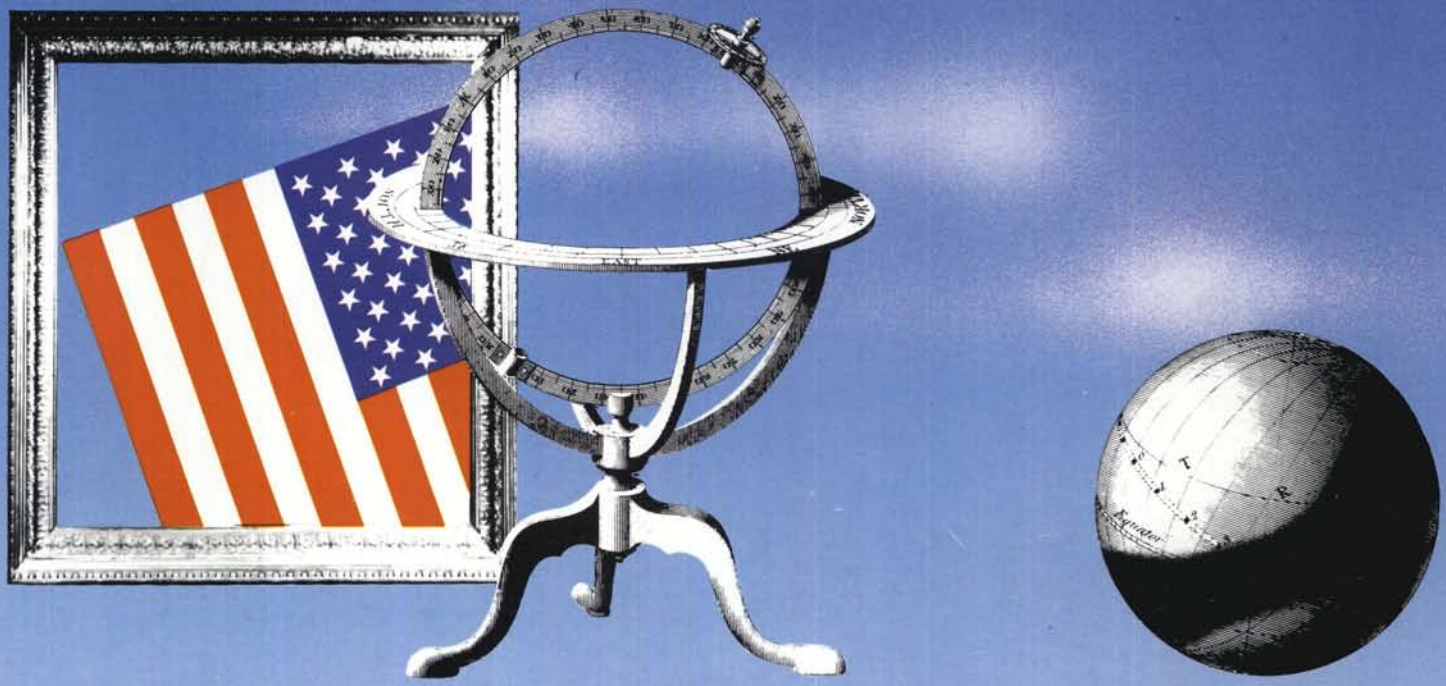
ENCOUNTER

CURRENT AFFAIRS – LITERATURE – THE ARTS

JULY/AUGUST 1988
£1.50

END OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE?
ANTHONY HARTLEY



A SECRET AGENT IN WARTIME CHINA
DAN PINCK

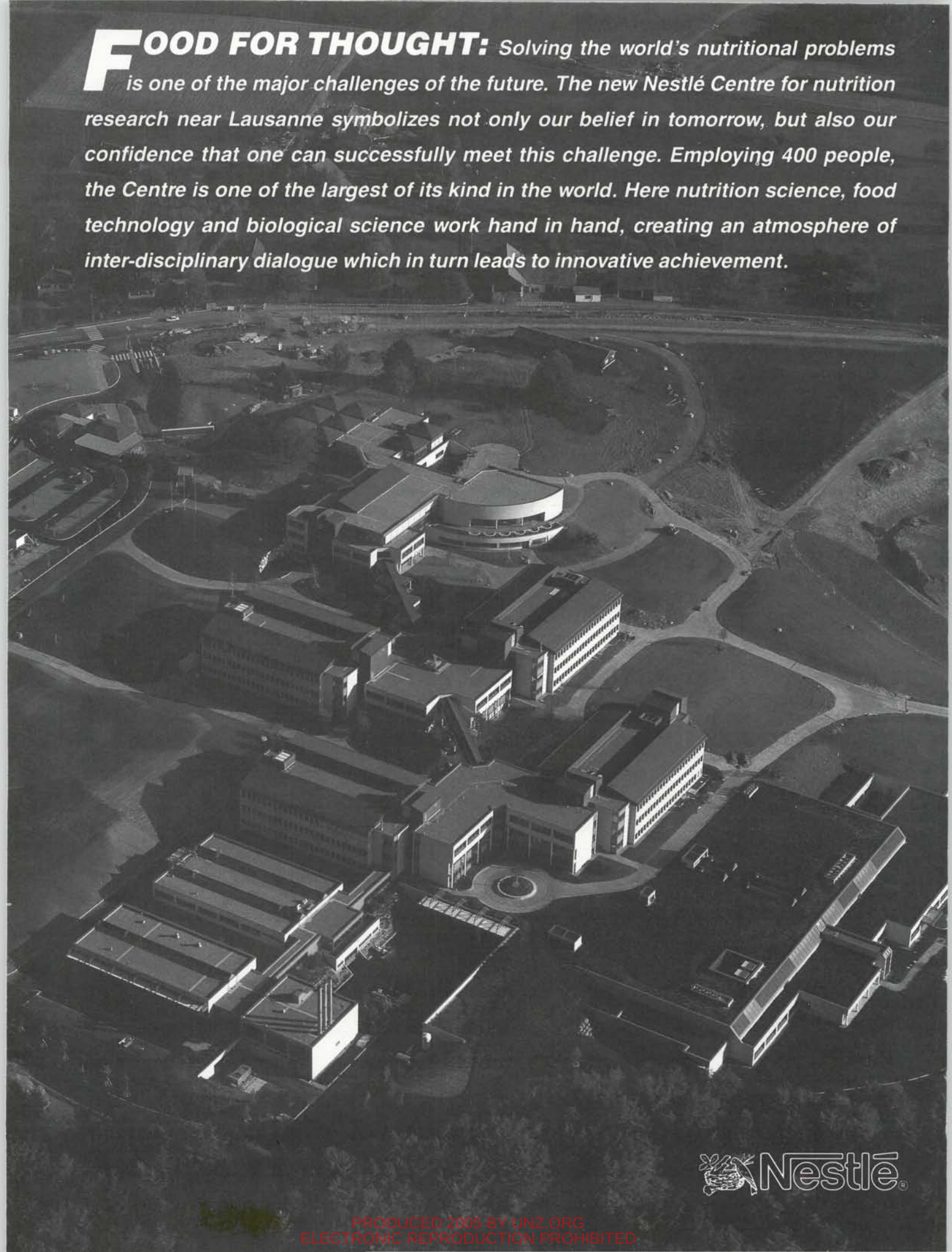
Anton Logoreci
Albanians in Yugoslavia

J. P. Stern
The Pseudo-Philosophy of Hope

Alexander Walker
Confessions of a Film Critic in Cannes

SPECIAL BOOK SECTION: BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIRS
Robert Rhodes James, Michael Sutton, Colin Style, Park Honan

PROQUEST INFORMATION AND LEARNING COMPANY. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Solving the world's nutritional problems is one of the major challenges of the future. The new Nestlé Centre for nutrition research near Lausanne symbolizes not only our belief in tomorrow, but also our confidence that one can successfully meet this challenge. Employing 400 people, the Centre is one of the largest of its kind in the world. Here nutrition science, food technology and biological science work hand in hand, creating an atmosphere of inter-disciplinary dialogue which in turn leads to innovative achievement.
Nestlé

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORS
Melvin J. Lasky
and Richard Mayne

EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER
Anthony Robinson

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Bryan Healing

SENIOR EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Jacqui Lewis

EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS
Margot Walmsley
J. C. Hall

ADVERTISEMENT DIRECTOR
Antony Pullen

PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISING
Sarah Clifford-Jones

ASSISTANT TO THE PUBLISHER
Janice Ward

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Sue Walker

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Pat Savage

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT
Pat Shutler

ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT
Shirley Lewis

RECEPTION
Corinna Holzschuh

ADVISORY BOARD
Maurice Cranston
D. J. Enright
Anthony Hartley
Leo Labedz
Edward Shils
Anthony Thwaite
George Urban
John Weightman

PUBLISHING ADVISERS
Lord Ardwick
Blouke Carus
Lord Cudlipp
Leon Levy
Julio Nunez
Julia Robinson
Jack Watmough
Gary Bogard (chairman)

COVER
David Costa

ENCOUNTER

JULY-AUGUST 1988 VOL. LXXI No. 2 ISSN 0013-7073

CONTENTS

End of the American Empire? — *Anthony Hartley* — 3
In Return (*story*) — *Richard Stern* — 10
Getting to Mrs Nestor's Farm — *Dan Pinck* — 15
Column — *M* — 24

POEMS

Gavin Ewart 14, Kevin Crossley-Holland 22, Gerard Smyth 37, William Bedford 54, Anthony Wilson 62, Geoffrey Holloway 75

MEN & IDEAS

Ernst Bloch, Philosopher of "Hope" — *J. P. Stern* — 27

NOTES & TOPICS

Paris Notebook — *Jean-François Revel* — 34
The Girl in the Centre — *Roy Kerridge* — 36

SPECIAL BOOK SECTION: BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIRS

The Epic Concluded — *Robert Rhodes James* — 38
Black & White Portraits — *Colin Style* — 42
Mitterrand's Extended Itinerary — *Michael Sutton* — 46
A Personal Enquiry — *Park Honan* — 50
Books Encountered — *R.M.* — 55

FILM

How I Bribed Myself on a Film Festival Jury — *Alexander Walker* — 56

EAST & WEST

Nationalism, as Disease & Cure — *Anton Logoreci* — 63

MUSIC

Playing on *What* Stradivarius? — *Michael Graubart* — 70

ARCHITECTURE

Brown Bread & Glass Fibre — *David Anstis* — 72

THEATRE

Country-House Drama — *Edward Pearce* — 76

BOXES

Footnotes & Tragedy (*Joseph S. Nye*) 6, The Overkill of "the M-Bomb" (*Russell Baker*) 79

AUTHORS 69 — LETTERS 78 — LIFE & LETTERS 81

© 1988 by Encounter Ltd. *Ten issues a year (July-August and September-October are single issues). Per copy: UK £1.50: USA $3.50. Back numbers £2.50 ($5.00). Postage/packaging: 75p ($2.00). Annual subscriptions: UK £18.00: USA & Canada $39.00 air-freight: India £20.00 by air. Elsewhere £19.00. Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 44 Great Windmill Street, London W1V 7PA (01-434 3063): UK Trade Distributors: Cutlerglen, 13 Newington Industrial Estate, Crampton Street, London SE17 3AZ (01-708 1308). Second-class postage paid at Rahway, NJ. US Postmaster: send address corrections to Encounter, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd Inc., 10B Engelhard Avenue, Avenel, NJ 07001. Manuscripts are returned only if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp) or International Reply Coupons.*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

transaction

Legitimacy & Force

(IN TWO VOLUMES)

STATE PAPERS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

Legitimacy and Force, Volumes One and Two are the state papers of Jeane J. Kirkpatrick as the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations. The volumes features all of the ambassador's UN and congressional testimonies, addresses, speeches and statements and a broad selection of speeches on international affairs and human rights. Together they present a lucid and comprehensive account of the position of one of America's most controversial UN representatives.

Volume One is oriented around themes of democratic societies and undemocratic systems, human rights and political obligations. Kirkpatrick examines the nature of legitimacy of democracy and the illegitimate nature of undemocratic nations. She also offers poignant commentary on the presidential election of 1980 and what the "Reagan phenomenon" has meant to the United States and the West.

Volume Two offers Kirkpatrick's formal remarks on nations and nation-building. She focuses on Grenada, Poland, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and the Soviet Union. She provides a particularly trenchant analysis of Israel: the Camp David accords, the assault on Israel inside the United Nations, and on the Middle East in general. Essential reading for everyone interested in the policymaking arena, these volumes exemplify Kirkpatrick's articulate conceptual underpinning of present-day American foreign policy.

These volumes, far from the usual government position papers, range widely and personally over the major international issues of our times. They are amplified in essays and articles written by Dr. Kirkpatrick for special occasions not related to specific UN work. In addition, the volumes contain crucial papers that were written after her resignation from the UN ambassadorship–and hence reflect Kirkpatrick's current interests and persuasions.

VOLUME ONE:
POLITICAL AND MORAL DIMENSIONS
ISBN: 0-88738-099-9 (cloth) **$34.95(p)**
ISBN: 0-88738-646-6 (paper) **$16.95(p)**
485 pp.

VOLUME TWO:
NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS
ISBN: 0-88738-100-6 (cloth) **$34.95(p)**
ISBN: 0-88738-647-4 (paper) **$16.95(p)**
420 pp.

$60/set (cloth) $30/set (paper)

Transaction Publishers *Dept. EF 16 Rutgers-The State University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anthony Hartley

End of the American Empire?

Where "the Kennedy Thesis" Goes Wrong

FEW HISTORICAL THEMES arouse such lively emotions as the rise and fall of empires. The toil and the nostalgia of domination are expressed in romantic images ranging from "barefooted friars . . . singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter" to Kipling's "Diego Valdez, High Admiral of Spain". Here are creation and mutability juxtaposed, the satisfaction of work well done and the bitterness of work gone to waste. Changes in national power are emotionally charged events, bringing with them a surge of self-confidence or self-reproach and, after the cycle has run its course, a lingering regret that can paralyse action and delay adaptation to a country's newly reduced state. The fate that overtook 17th-century Spain and, at one point, seemed to threaten 20th-century Britain was to be unable to shake off the recollection of a larger national past.

Accounts of such historical catastrophes have always been attractive. The Western imagination has continued to be haunted by the ghost of Rome, the model fallen Empire; and, after Montesquieu and Gibbon, philosophers of history such as Spengler and Toynbee have continued to base their systems on the disappearance of the classical world-state and its culture. The most considerable recent example of such a downfall, the dissolution of the British Empire, however, has not yet found its great historian—perhaps because its episodes were insufficiently dramatic, a whittling away from White Paper to White Paper rather than a desperate last struggle.

ANTHONY HARTLEY *is the author of "The State of England" and "Gaullism: The Rise and Fall of a Political Movement". He was editor of the monthly "Interplay" in New York and has served as a political analyst for many British papers, including "The Guardian", "The Economist", and "The Sunday Telegraph". His frequent contributions to* ENCOUNTER *include "Does the Ambassador Have a Future? (March 1987), "The Remoulding of British Politics" (September-October 1987) and "The 'Cold War' for Beginners" (February 1988).*

Paul Kennedy is the latest historian to embark on a study of how power moves from one nation to another.[1] His best-selling book is not a philosophy of historical change, nor does it deal with the development of culture except in so far as this concerns military technology and economic growth. Religion, for example, is almost totally excluded as a factor affecting political power. Professor Kennedy puts the emphasis on economic expansion and its connection with military and political power, quoting Leopold von Ranke's fragmentary essay on "The Great Powers" (1833) as the predecessor of his book. His narrative moves smoothly from the 16th-century primacy of Spain to that of France under Louis XIV and Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries, to end with the rise of Russia and the United States, whose antagonism was to form a bi-polar world system after 1945. The last chapter of the book is a look into a future where the foundations of American and Russian power may be threatened by the rise of new competitors for economic supremacy: China, Japan, and perhaps a united Europe.

Kennedy is an experienced and talented historian, whose previous works have dealt with the conflicts between European powers that finally led to World Wars I and II. Despite an excursus about the Chinese failure of the Mings to maintain their naval power, this is primarily a book about a European state system which, in two World Wars, managed to include the whole world in the conflicts it had generated, eventually losing its power to the Continental states of America and Russia. Seen in this perspective, America and Russia are successor states to previous European hegemonies—the United States to Britain's maritime empire, and the Soviet Union to French or German attempts to assemble an overwhelming Continental bloc.[2]

This is easily read, intelligently presented, chronological

[1] *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000.* By PAUL KENNEDY. Unwin Hyman, £18.95; Random House, $24.95.

[2] These can also be identified with the "pivot area" or "heartland" and the "outer or insular crescent" of Sir Halford Mackinder's famous essay *The Geographical Pivot of History* (1904).

Mackinder's own reflections on this geographical distinction suggest that the advantage in any global contest lies with the possessor of the "heartland"; but his theory has been criticised for neglecting the role of the American continent, the size of the "heartland" being exaggerated by his use of Mercator's projection.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history, full of facts, figures and moral lessons for practitioners of global power. No wonder that Professor Kennedy, much to his own surprise, has succeeded in making serious history a best-seller in the United States. One wonders whether his book will be translated into Russian. Certainly it must be required reading for Messrs Dobrynin and Arbatov, anxiously scanning developments in Washington. For its popularity may have something significant to tell us about the state of mind of the American people.

LIKE RANKE'S ESSAY, this study of "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers" is a pragmatic work of history. World-historical views do not intrude uncomfortably between the reader and his enjoyment of the narration of events and the analysis of causes. Yet Professor Kennedy has his theory which, like the Phantom of the Opera, makes its presence felt behind his marshalling of facts and figures on the stage of history. It is this theory which has appeared to Americans so relevant to their present situation as to take on something of the accents of prophecy. There is, therefore, no reason to apologise for devoting some time to it, and leaving to professional historians the task of criticising the interpretation of the various periods covered by the book. This is an ambitious book, and it is fair to judge it by its central thesis. One might add that it is no bad thing that such books should be written for the intelligent general reader. Professor Kennedy has striven to close the gap between academia and a non-specialist, but intellectual audience; and he has been rewarded accordingly.

In his introduction Kennedy begins by saying that the main subject of his book is "the *interaction* between economics and strategy, as each of the leading states in the international system strove to enhance its wealth and its power. . . ." On the next page he writes:

> "The history of the rise and later fall of the leading countries in the Great Power system since the advance of western Europe in the sixteenth century . . . shows a very significant correlation *over the longer term* between productive and revenue-raising capacities on the one hand and military strength on the other."

A little further on, however, a "very significant correlation" becomes "a causal relationship between the shifts which have occurred over time in the general economic and productive balances and the position occupied by individual powers in the international system. . . ." A state achieving economic expansion will express this prosperity in an increase of military power. It will then possess the strength to outmatch its competitors and establish its own imperium. Yet, by so doing, it risks entering into a cycle of decline:

> "If, however, too large a proportion of the state's resources is diverted from wealth creation and allocated instead to military purposes, then that is likely to lead to a weakening of national power over the longer term. In the same way, if a state over-extends itself strategically—by, say, the conquest of extensive territories or the waging of costly wars—it runs the risk that the potential benefits from external expansion may be outweighed by the great expense of it all—a dilemma which becomes acute if the nation concerned has entered a period of relative economic decline."[3]

In other words, the state, which has succeeded in establishing its relative supremacy at the expense of its rivals, tends to fall victim to a *hubris* which leads it to neglect or overstrain the real sources of its power (Professor Kennedy's "imperial overstretch").

And this decline has an element of inevitability about it. For the political power of Empire, or whatever else we choose to call the experience of ruling and defending far-flung national interests or domains, is distracting. At every point the imperial power will find itself in contact with opposing interests and the frontiers of potentially hostile nations. To withdraw from positions once acquired—to cut down the maintenance of the national interest overseas—would be to create a void into which other forces would flow and perhaps to start a retreat which would end as a rout. A withdrawal from the exercise of power in a given area is liable to disrupt an imperial system which is organically connected; it radically changes the expectations of competing countries, as well as existing allies.

The possession of preponderant power in any international system is such a powerful preoccupation that it must engage the time and attention of rulers to the exclusion of other considerations. They cannot easily pause to consider whether they are "over-extended". Their actions or reactions are dictated by the imperial environment in which they exist. Marshal Foch said of war that it was not a science but a terrible and passionate drama. The same might be said of the management of global power.

SEEN IN THIS WAY, Paul Kennedy's explanation of the rise and fall of great powers assumes the aspect of a cyclic theory of history, not without some resemblance to that put forward, in very different (Islamic) terms and very different surroundings, by Ibn Khaldûn in the 14th century. For just as, in the latter's view, the nomadic conqueror of oases or cultivated lands loses, in the enjoyment of his conquest, the dynamic qualities which gave him military superiority, and falls an easy victim to succeeding waves of desert warriors, so a great power in a more sophisticated international system succumbs to its environment—the equivalent of a Saharan pleasure-dome—and comes to take for granted the foundation of domestic strength on which its achievement depends.

Perhaps, indeed, it has no choice. Power is an intoxicating

[3] In an article in *The Times* (12 March 1988) Professor Kennedy has summarised his conclusions in a way that is not noticeably different from these quotations. He places slightly less emphasis, however, on economic factors as the proximate cause of the take-off to political power. A great power is said to be "boosted by its expanding material base". This may be so, but there are examples to the contrary.

For instance, the political expansion of Louis XIV's France was accompanied by depression and periodic economic crises which brought with them bankruptcy and famine. See Pierre Goubert: *Louis XIV et vingt millions de Français* (Paris, 1977), p. 19.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

experience, and it may be that no imperium can be founded without some of the delusions of intoxication. "What do they know of England who only England know?" asked Kipling. To be part of the government of India at the end of the 19th century was certainly a more exciting and romantic experience than trying to arrest the decline of British industry in Manchester or Birmingham. For imperialists, including a visionary statesman like Joseph Chamberlain, Empire was also seen as a remedy for that decline, a huge market which, if it were organised properly, would provide opportunities by which British industry might be stimulated to fresh efforts. There was, therefore, at this apogee of the British Empire, no apparent contradiction between imperial expansion and national prosperity. Trade, it was felt, followed the flag; and as long as this was true, adventures in distant parts of the world could be regarded as invigorating, rather than exhausting, for the body politic.

In the mood of self-confidence engendered by the possession of Empire, the strain on Britain's resources of commitments around the world was not thought to be an insuperable difficulty. Those who were in favour of "national efficiency" were also imperialists. To cut commitments would have seemed to them inappropriate; what was required was a better organisation of imperial power.

In France, too, it was argued that the acquisition of an empire would serve the country's economy. Many of the original advocates of colonial expansion in France were disciples of Saint-Simon and saw imperialism in terms of vast and beneficial schemes of economic development. Anti-imperialists retorted that such schemes would be better carried out in metropolitan France.[4]

In the past, the fall of Empires has been attributed to various causes, according to the beliefs or prejudices of the writer and his time. Gibbon, living in the polite and sceptical 18th century, saw the barbarians and Christianity as the agents of Rome's downfall. By the end of the 19th century "decadence", envisaged as a form of racial degeneration, was seen as the principal factor undermining the supremacy of great powers; this view could be reinforced by examples of effete Oriental despots, apparently enervated by luxury and exhausted by the pleasures of the harem.

Since 1945, however, the strikingly rapid disappearance of the British Empire has provided a new paradigm for the decline of national power. Historians such as Corelli Barnett have pointed to the fact that this decline was caused or accompanied by economic difficulties, in particular the failure of British industry to keep up with its competitors. It is this model of decay that Kennedy has adapted to other cases such as that of Imperial Spain, which it fits with more or less plausibility. Economic success and failure, as an explanation of the rise and fall of great powers, suit an age which is as conscious of economic factors as the 19th century was of biological; and the British experience underlies the whole book. The final projections into the future are an attempt to ascertain whether or not the United States and the Soviet Union are about to suffer a similar fatigue.

Paul Kennedy denies any leaning towards economic determinism, stressing that there are many other factors—"geography, military organisation, national morale, the alliance system . . ."—which affect the location of power. Nevertheless, economic expansion and decline do play a decisive role in his account of the relative strength of the main actors on the international stage and their changes in rank over the centuries. However, even if one accepts the fairly obvious fact that the growth of economic power makes the expansion of political influence, the seizure of disputed territory and the subsidising of allies easier than before, the question of the *cause* of such a process still remains open.

Economic expansion, after all, does not take place on its own. Of course, it requires the existence of natural resources and a population possessing technical skills, and can be aided by geography and opportune scientific discovery. But it is also brought about by the existence of peace at home, the encouragement of trade and industry by government, monetary stability, and a host of other factors that can be broadly defined as "political". It is the ability of rulers to make the best of national resources, to encourage (or at least not to hinder!) private economic initiatives and to create a legislative framework within which the economy can flourish that helps to provide the impetus for successful performance. A favourable political environment is decisive in creating the conditions needed for economic expansion—a point recently made in reverse in David Marquand's study of Britain's economic and industrial decline.[5] It is the task of political leadership to adapt policies to the changing circumstances of national history so that new challenges can be met as they appear and the various demands on the energies of the state be brought in balance with one another.[6] A living polity is one that has not lost its capacity for change. Nostalgia for the past or the dead weight of habit and *situations acquises* produce a political society that has lost the ability to react effectively to its total environment. The capacity to choose wisely among the heap of possibilities—geographic, military, economic—which are available to any nation is what makes the difference between success and failure. It cannot, therefore, be said that econo-

---

[4] See, Raoul Girardet: *L'idée coloniale en France de 1871 à 1962* (Paris, 1979), chs. I-III. It is interesting to note that the same arguments of economic advantage have been put forward by the Brandt Commission to support their case for an increased effort by the industrialised countries in the provision of aid for the Third World. Past experience might suggest that such pleading is of doubtful validity.

[5] *The Unprincipled Society: New Demands and Old Politics.* By David Marquand. Jonathan Cape, £18.00. Professor Marquand deplores the British failure to give birth to a "developmental state", which he sees as the result of outmoded political habits. Interestingly, he seems to suggest that the last chance of this was to be found in the Liberal Imperialists and Rosebery's party of "national efficiency".

[6] In an interesting article Samuel P. Huntington has recently discussed the need to bring into equilibrium American resources and American commitments, reviving an idea originated by Walter Lippmann during the Second World War. Professor Huntington believes that the gap between commitments and power, deplored by Lippmann, need not be disastrous. He, too, makes the comparison between Britain around 1900 and the present situation of the United States. See Samuel P. Huntington, "Coping with the Lippmann Gap" in *Foreign Affairs* (America and the World 1987/88), pp. 434-477.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mic strength generates military success—rather, both of these things are the consequence of a political dynamism which assembles and releases a potential for national achievement in different spheres.

Economic failure, therefore, is a symptom—a very important symptom—of national decline rather than its root cause. As such, it cannot be treated in isolation. A simple determination to cultivate one's own garden more assiduously will not be enough to save an Empire on the skids. What is wanted is a political impetus that breaks down the inhibitions inherited from the past and opens up new directions for the future. To be sure, there will be changes in relative power that cannot be averted by any policies, however prudent.

It is difficult to see, for instance, how Western European states could have escaped being dwarfed by the United States and the Soviet Union—although, without World War II, their decline would have taken longer. It is also probable that, even had Britain directed its attention to the reconstruction of its industries instead of, say, to the Boer War, the disappearance of the British Empire would not have been delayed long beyond its actual span. A change in the scale of those states participating in the great power game could only have failed to diminish Western Europe if its component nations had been willing to combine into a larger entity. But it required the shock of defeat and decline to induce countries, which had been numbered among the leaders of international society, to form a European Community. After all, packing fifty years of history into five was too much for most European leaders.

However, the extraordinary popularity of Paul Kennedy's book in the United States is due, not so much to what it says about the past, as to its implications for the future. The cycle he describes appears relevant to a great power which, over the last 20 years, has come to believe that its world predominance is beginning to falter. The loss of a war in Viet Nam, the scandals and sense of malaise that have afflicted the American political system, the budgetary and trade deficits that have turned the United States into a debtor nation, the economic competition from the countries of the "Pacific rim" —all these symptoms can easily be identified as the consequences of Professor Kennedy's "imperial overstretch".

The commitments are certainly there. The United States maintains armies in Western Europe and in Japan and Korea. It has sent a fleet to the Persian Gulf to safeguard the flow of oil (which it now needs to import). It may be required to devote massive resources to prevent Central America falling into a chaos which could spread up to and over the American frontier. And it must also spend billions of dollars to keep ahead in the nuclear arms race. The parallel with the far-flung commitments of the British or Spanish Empires is easy to draw—perhaps too easy, almost facile.

It is no comfortable message that the book conveys to the American reader whose masochistic instincts, it seems, have been thoroughly aroused by this Anglo-Saxon epistle via Yale. Moreover, as Owen Harries has pointed out, the argument serves a useful purpose for opponents of the Reagan administration. In an election year the cry of "balanced budgets and less overseas intervention" is a powerful draw—a lesson that is brought home in Professor Kennedy's article in *The Times* (12 March 1988).

Footnotes & Tragedy

Washington D.C.

IS AMERICAN POWER *declining? No, but the success of Paul Kennedy's "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers" is symptomatic of Americans' belief that it is. When a history professor's book with 1,298 footnotes becomes a number-two best seller, that suggests something about the audience. In Mr Kennedy's words:*

"The difficulties experienced by contemporary societies which are militarily top-heavy merely repeat those which, in their time, affected Phillip II's Spain, Nicholas II's Russia and Hitler's Germany."

LOOK AGAIN *before you draw gloomy conclusions. The United States is nothing like Phillip II's empire, where, as Mr Kennedy said, three-quarters of all government expenditures were "devoted to war or to debt repayments for previous wars". Even after President Reagan's buildup, American defence outlay is only 6.5% of GNP and is lower than those of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, which each spent more than 10%.*

AMERICA IS NOT **in the position of Phillip II's Spain, and the 1990s are not like the 1660s. We must be careful not to let historical analysis suggest policies that accelerate the decline they are supposed to avert. With proper policies in the 1990s, America will remain the most powerful state in the 21st century.**

Joseph S. Nye

Professor of International Affairs, Harvard University

in the NEW YORK TIMES

AT THIS POINT, with senators, business leaders and television anchormen in a great taking, it seems a little presumptuous to strike a sceptical note. But the question has to be asked. Is the United States really about to "fall" in any sense of the word? Is it really into "imperial overstretch"—a phrase which, to the irreverent, might suggest the cosmetic difficulties of a Washington hostess rather than a phase of American history? Do Japan's GNP figures also spell *mene mene tekel upharsin*? Are the Medes and the Persians at the gate?

For a start, a country as large, as populous and as rich as the United States is hardly likely to be diminished by the rise of any other power in the same way that the participants in the old European state system were diminished. Who is to dwarf America? Even China would have a job, and the rise of China as a competitor for supremacy in the international system is a good way off yet. Moreover, as we have seen, declining economic performance, supposing it does exist, is not a natural phenomenon whose appearance signals unavoidable catastrophe, but a trend that can be reversed if the poli-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tical will is there. Without getting into the arguments about President Reagan's economic policies, it would be possible for a new American administration to embark on a change of course. After all, every new President is said to "re-make the Republic", and that capacity for regeneration still exists. Equally, the world commitments of the United States could be rearranged so as to lessen the effort needed to sustain them. The report on "Discriminate Deterrence" (the so-called "Iklé report") has been one recent attempt to show how this might be done. Never mind the fact that everyone else instantly disagreed with it and that the selling of it to European opinion was less than adequate. America has many options open to it; what it requires is leaders who will choose between them with care and common sense and will then have the will to carry through their own decisions.

IT IS, OF COURSE, perfectly true that, in the 1950s and '60s, American policy did appear extraordinarily ambitious. For consider: America in 1945 was by far the strongest country in the world, the country which had to assist others towards recovery from a war which left Europe and the Far East devastated. It was the one country with the economic strength to repair the damage, the one country with the military strength to act as a barrier to the expansion of the Soviet Union. Americans, therefore, were forced to take a view of the world and develop policies to guide it in the direction indicated to them by their own historic experience: that of democracy and economic expansion through free enterprise.

The idealistic desire to remake the international community in the image of a free and prosperous transatlantic democracy has always lurked behind the foreign policy of the United States—in a sense it was its excuse for having a foreign policy at all. At its most absurd that ambition was expressed by Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska as early as 1940:

"With God's help, we will lift Shanghai up and up, ever up, until it is just like Kansas City. . . ."

The same feelings found a more sophisticated form in the powerful rationality of the John F. Kennedy administration which combined a policy of quietening the central conflict with the Soviet Union and, simultaneously, trying to exclude Russian influence from the new states of the Third World. This impressive intellectual construction—one of the most intelligent formulations of foreign policy ever produced by the government of a great power—failed through its over-optimism and its underestimation of the strain involved in such an exercise of global power. Since the turning-point of Viet Nam, the foreign policy of the United States has been, despite Presidential rhetoric, pragmatic and modest in its ambitions.

Over the last 15 years striking gestures in foreign policy have largely been ruled out by the determination of Congress to reassert itself. Grenada, after all, was a very small intervention, the conveying of a message to the Soviet Union, with little risk involved. Indeed, some would say that American policy has not been sufficiently interventionist over the past decade. The practical diminution of executive power which followed the weakening of the Presidency, first by the Watergate scandal and, more recently, by the incompetence with which the not unreasonable aim of re-establishing some links with Iran was executed, has allowed little scope for boldness in the conduct of international relations. It used to be an article of belief among American historians that Congressional forays into foreign policy were generally unfortunate. What has happened since the Viet Nam War has done nothing to contradict this.

OVER THE LAST DECADE the United States can hardly be said to have suffered strain through any very extravagant extension of its commitments. The one very serious addition to America's burdens—the presence in the Persian Gulf—was inspired by a direct threat to a major American interest. None the less, there has been a change in the American position—a shift more subtle than the relative diminution of power caused by the post-War recovery of other countries.

The United States is still the supervisor and responsible head of a system of power which, in addition to its military aspects, includes a world economic structure, originally based on American specifications in the immediate post-War period. Despite the Nixon administration's destruction of the monetary stability agreed at Bretton Woods, this economic order remains largely intact. In particular, all American administrations have stuck to their belief in free trade, little as this may be appreciated by business lobbies or labour unions. At first, a free-trading world worked to the advantage of the United States, opening up new markets for its capital goods and spreading around the world branches of so-called "multinational" companies which, however, were really subsidiaries of American firms. This was the situation described in Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber's book *Le défi américain* (1967), which happened to be published after this phase of American economic supremacy was long past. Western Europe and Japan, followed by other countries of the "Pacific rim", had not only caught up technologically—the so-called "technology gap" was closed much sooner than the prophets had believed possible—but had also become formidable competitors of American business in its own domestic market. In particular, the Pacific countries enjoyed the advantage of low labour costs and a high degree of industrial discipline while, at the same time, protecting their own markets (not so much by tariffs as by cultural inhibitions).

As this competition began to make itself felt—and, already in the early 1970s, the United States was appealing to its European allies to "share the Japanese burden"—it might have been thought that America would move towards protectionism. But the Pacific countries concerned were allies of the United States at a time when allies in East Asia were badly needed. Japan especially was, in some sense, the brightest jewel in the American imperial crown, a booming democratic state created by General Douglas MacArthur. Two decades on, the United States, despite its adverse balance of trade, is still willing to absorb some 40% of Japanese exports—a figure which demonstrates clearly enough the high value set on Japan as an ally and friend, and also the sense of responsibil-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity with which American administrations approach the management of the world economic system.

For the United States has continued to believe in free trade. Its position as leader of the Western world-bloc has made it apprehensive of the consequences of any relapse into competitive protectionism and the economic chaos of an unregulated world system. It would be untrue, therefore, to say that America was suffering economically from the strain of Empire in the same way that this could be said of 17th-century Spain or 20th-century Britain. It is still a very strong country, based upon enormous industrial strength and a wide range of technological skill. It presides over a world system which it believes to be for the general good and which still favours economic expansion. But the paradox is that this system, of which the United States is the inspirer and the upholder, is no longer working to its advantage—or, rather, is working less to its advantage than to that of other participants. The United States is bearing the brunt both of military effort and economic responsibility while its allies—so it must seem to Americans—reap the benefits.

Japan has been the principal beneficiary, overtaking America's GNP-per head and competing successfully in markets which goods from the United States can hardly enter. Yet this result has been achieved by courtesy of an American-sponsored system of free trade. Were the United States to renounce free-trading policies and spread protectionism through the industrialised world, Japan would be the first to suffer. Despite the irritation of Japanese politicians and bankers with the refusal of the United States to act as a proper debtor nation should, they ought to be conscious that their own economic success is dependent on American willingness to continue to act as the pillar of the world trading system.

But even supposing Japanese economic great-power status to be less vulnerable than it is, can we imagine—as, presumably, Paul Kennedy's theory would have us—that this will be translated into military or political terms? To achieve great-power rank in military terms Japan would have to acquire nuclear weapons. Like West Germany, the other country whose industrial performance would seem to entitle it to greater political influence, Japan is inhibited by its past from becoming a nuclear power. But even were this not so, any attempt to exploit newly-acquired military superiority would come up against the paradox of the limits imposed on such endeavours by late 20th-century conditions.

At earlier times in world history possession of military superiority could be used to achieve an extension of territory or the defeat of some traditional enemy—a victory followed by an increase of political influence. The advent of nuclear deterrence, however, has meant that it is now counter-productive to try to achieve such objectives by military means. Since a general war between great powers would destroy both victor and vanquished, military strength is no longer immediately convertible into enhanced political status.

In terms of defence, of course, the position is the reverse. Those countries possessing the minimum equipment necessary to pose a credible nuclear threat to any aggressor will be left alone, even though their rival may have three or four times their capacity. Countries such as Israel or South Africa which face a threat to their existence, but are thought to possess nuclear weapons, find themselves in a relatively strong position, since their very desperation adds credibility to their deterrent.

Such a situation, in which military strength cannot be "cashed in" for political advantage implies a world in which changes in the *status quo* become very difficult. To revert to the case of Japan, not only does its undoubted economic superiority fail to find expression in military power but, even were it to do so, it is hard to see how any Japanese imperium could result from it, given Japan's geographical position and the competition from China and the Soviet Union. In other words, the links between economic expansion, military power, and political imperium, which Professor Kennedy describes and which existed in the past, now appear to have been cut. Japan could certainly afford modern weaponry and possesses the capacity to manage an international system of its own. But its strength derives from its existence within a world of free trade guaranteed by the United States. At the present moment, it is American warships which are ensuring the free passage of oil from the Persian Gulf to, amongst other places, Japan. Japan, to be sure, could (and perhaps will have to) relieve the United States of some of the burdens of keeping the present world economic system going. But that is not the same thing as a "declining America" being replaced by an "ascendant Japan".

Professor Kennedy does not discuss the difficulties attendant on the expression of power in the "one world" of the late 20th century. Despite (perhaps, because of) the speed of technological change, there are a number of factors which inhibit the rise and fall of great powers in the 18th- or 19th-century sense of the term.

War and revolution have been the traditional instruments of such transformations, but war between great powers is now too destructive to contemplate as a means of policy, while revolution (as distinct from scattered assaults by groups of terrorists) has never taken place in an advanced industrial society. Thus, the catalysts for a change in rank among the existing Great Powers seem likely to be lacking in the foreseeable future; though no one can foresee what the next century will produce in the way of disagreeable surprises.

Although it is unlikely that either of the Superpowers will go into a decline which will eliminate it from the running, there can still be considerable shifts in the relative balance of power—changes that will loom large enough for those experiencing them. For instance, were the United States to react to its present economic difficulties by adopting a policy of protectionism, this would have the effect of damaging and repelling its European and East Asian allies. The United States, despite its political adherence to free trade, is a naturally protectionist country, less dependent on trade than either the EEC or Japan; and it would be easy for it to slip into a neo-isolationist stance, especially if it were also preoccupied by events south of the Rio Grande. In that case, tempting offers to Western Europe and Japan from Mr Gorbachov—

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

offers which almost certainly form part of the Russian diplomatic "new look"—would be doubly effective. A switch in relationships which resulted in a symbiosis between Russian industry and German or Japanese management skills and technology would not destroy the United States; but it would make its isolation unpleasantly real.

This kind of development, beginning with Russian proposals about Central Europe directed towards West Germany, is the scenario most likely to produce a considerable change in the balance-of-power and a notable increase in strength for the Soviet Union. The alliance with Western Europe is essential for the continued extension of American power in the balance of power and a notable increase in strength such an extension with all the burdens it implies.

IT WOULD ALSO BE easy enough to imagine a similar shift of the balance against the Soviet Union. *Glasnost* and the political disturbances produced by attempts to improve the performance of the Soviet economy could have repercussions on the client states of Eastern Europe, bringing about outbreaks of discontent of a familiar type. Such a situation would be more immediately dangerous to stability in Europe than American neo-isolationism, since the Soviet Union would undoubtedly strive to reassert its authority by military means. The paradox of a Great Power which is good at armies, but bad at managing its economy, is an uncomfortable one for its neighbours. The consciousness of a change to its disadvantage in the balance of power could cause the Soviet leadership to react forcibly and unpredictably.

But, whatever the balance of advantage between them, it is probable that both the United States and the Soviet Union will still be up there competing for global power in the year 2010, the moment when (according to the Iklé report) "China and Japan will have the economic capacity to act as major world powers. . . ." For reasons of geography, size of population, and the possession of nuclear arsenals, the dominion of the Superpowers is less mutable than the delicately poised supremacies of the European past. The succession of Spanish, French, British, and American centuries will hardly continue with the passage of hegemony to Russia or China (let alone Japan). The Great Powers will go on dancing their intricate diplomatic patterns—whether a *pas de deux* or a *pas de quatre*—but it will become increasingly hard to say who is calling the tune.

IT WILL NOW HAVE BECOME apparent that there are considerable difficulties in applying Paul Kennedy's simple theory of the shift of power in modern history to contemporary conditions. One aspect of that theory is the idea that history operates by a sort of "survival of the fittest"—states attaining their supremacy by trampling on their predecessors. Of course, such conflicts to the death have marked various periods of the past; but there have also been times when powerful states existed alongside each other in relatively untroubled equilibrium. Comment in the United States on *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* has largely seized upon this Darwinian dynamic in the relations between states, drawing the moral (in an unconscious reversion to the Kennedy administration) that "we must get America moving"—whether forwards or backwards is a matter of opinion. Yet despite the present problems of the United States, which are those of all Great Powers, such vocal anxiety seems misguided. There is no reason to think that the Republic will not succeed in overcoming its difficulties or that its future is at risk if it doesn't manage to outdo Japan in GNP-per head.

For the sake of introducing a little sanity into the debate, perhaps we should do as Professor Kennedy has done and return to Leopold von Ranke's old essay on the Great Powers. At its conclusion, the famous German historian compares the relationships of the nations of his day to that of their various literatures:

> "There would only be miserable boredom, were the various literatures to mingle and fuse their individuality. No! The union of all reposes on the independence of each. . . ."

In the same way, among states "the decided positive predominance of a single one would be to the destruction of the others. . . ." Ranke was writing at the time of the Concert of Europe, which held in suspense conflicts between the Great Powers between 1815 and 1853. That did not last; and his own countrymen preferred to listen to the nationalist exhortations of Heinrich von Treitschke. None the less, his vision of a peacefully plural world is not irrelevant to a conjuncture of international affairs in which (as President Nixon remarked in 1973) other centres of power are developing to complicate the post-War bi-polar structure.

The "rise" of new Superpowers need not necessarily imply the "fall" of existing ones. Before reaching any such conclusion, we should decide what is meant by the "power" of states in the late 20th century and whether this word, always mysterious in its nature, does not comprise a mixture of qualities and endowments which vary noticeably from country to country. The practice of religion, the pursuit of scientific knowledge, the creation of art, literature, and music—all these things influence the destinies of nations in ways that are not as easy to quantify as military and economic strength and are, hence, liable to be ignored. Like human beings, states are competitive; but that is not the sum total of their activities.

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers offers only a partial view of history. Americans, therefore, can afford to be relaxed about its intimations of mortality. They have no reason to fear the more varied distribution of power accompanying a plural world system. As for the absolute power primacy of the United States, that is not—and will not be—in question.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Richard Stern

In Return

WALTERS HAD BEEN in Kyoto four or five times, but only one time counted for him. The other times he'd come for conferences and stayed in the hotels—the Miyako, the International—and hardly got outside. There'd been tours of the Imperial and Ninjo Palaces, a walk through the Katsura gardens, and an hour at Gion Corner for snippets of puppet drama, tea ceremony, *gagaku* music and flower arrangement; there'd also been a couple of hours in a night-club where girls dressed as apes mounted each other. He'd been too tired for curiosity, let alone excitement. What tired him, what counted then and always, was serious business seriously conducted. Even failed business succeeded as part of larger schemes: definition of ends and relationships as they altered from administration to administration.

Walters had worn several hats: Assistant Secretary in the Commerce Department; negotiator for Bechtel and the Chase Bank; and, for the last six years, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs in the State Department. In four decades of professional life, there'd been fifty-odd conferences in Japan alone.

Almost never, though, had he spent time there on his own. The *almost* was accounted for by five days in the summer of 1973. By himself—with next to no official assistance—he'd stayed in a small Japanese inn near the Kodaiji Temple in Kyoto. He couldn't remember now who had told him about the place or who had made the arrangements, but he remembered that he'd taken the *shinkansen* from Tokyo Station and called Mrs Fukuma rom the one in Kyoto. A slender woman with thick black hair and a smile so full of sweetness he'd remembered it as well as anything else, she had met his taxi at the Temple and led him through small streets to her small inn. It was why, 14 years later, he was back, once again taking time out of a life in which there was very little time to be out.

Walters was most at home at work. (His wife Dorothy's explanation for this was "Some people look better frowning".) A problem-solver, problems were Walters' pleasure. (The more impersonal the problem, the better he liked it.) A bit of paternal and connubial motion persuaded even those who counted that he was a good father and husband. He was, he knew, a lucky one. (Walters disliked confessions but had heard enough to know how lucky.) Dorothy was charming, civil, amusing, brave, loyal and loving. What he most loved about her was the similarity between her public and private selves.

"She's of a piece", he told their daughter Laura. "*Integer vitae*. Is that the Latin for it?" One reason their marriage functioned well—both felt this—was that unlike many official wives she didn't come with him on business trips. And on the rare occasion when she flew with him, she'd sight-see, shop and socialise on her own. Their schedules were distinct; they might see each other at breakfast or at supper, but there was no pressure to do that. If they did, it was—usually—a bonus. "We don't lean on each other", was their boast.

He told Laura, "We're parallel lines, which make a track on which your life has rolled along reasonably well. Is that too fancy?" (Laura herself had had less luck: her second marriage had just gone off the tracks.)

"I'd like to see that Kyoto *ryokan* of yours", Dorothy said out of the blue when he told her about the next Tokyo conference. "Would you have time, or shall I go myself?"

It came out that she thought she'd better go while she was still spry enough to sleep and eat on the floor and to rise without cracking her joints. fifty-four, and no athlete, she was limber, walked miles, swam, lifted things, and worked in the garden.

Walters hadn't thought of going back to the inn. He disliked the idea of sentimental returns, preferred to keep his better memories untested. Still, bits of fatigue floated in him; it had been a difficult winter, why not take a few days off? Kyoto was a good place to do it.

He had the Embassy find out if the *ryokan* was functioning, and if Fukuma-san was still there. It was, she was.

EVEN IN THE DEPARTMENT, there were opposing views about the Japanese. Products of several thousand insular years, their contradictions—arrogance and humility, courtesy and rudeness, generosity and niggardliness, originality and lack of it, xenophilia and xenophobia—signalled to some a mentality incomprehensible to Westerners or even other Easterners. There were people who had spent 30 years in Japan who said they had no Japanese friends and no idea what went on in a single Japanese head; there were

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

others, some who knew the language and some who didn't, who felt the Japanese were exactly the same as everybody else with the same problems; Westerners would understand them as soon as they understood the problems.

The contradictions were also topographical, architectural and physical. There were the glass, steel and concrete skyscrapers, and there were the little shrines with their curling roofs, the wooden plaques with the *kanji* inscriptions, the trees filled with blossoms and white prayers knotted on the branches. There was the terrific noise, the loud public announcements and police commands, and then the quiet of gardens, the small, carless streets, the noiseless electronics of light and motion. There was the bulky male strut and the demure, inturned delicacy of the traditional woman.

The country had survived the endless eruptions whose deposits were its ubiquitous mountains. No wonder the holiest holy place was Fujiyama. Walters and Dorothy saw it, perfectly symmetrical and snow-capped, from the hotel room, and for much of the trip to Kyoto they'd seen it swell and spread, green beneath its creamy top.

Dorothy had bought a book of Hokusai's, *Thirty-six Views of Fuji*, full of charming scenes from Edo markets, Shinto prayer wickets and the mountain itself. The most beautiful was one called *Red Fuji*, the mountain a triangular ember in the clear air. To convert the fearful—climbers were still regularly killed in Fuji avalanches—into the sacred, a subject of lithographs and haiku; wasn't that *pure Japanese*?

Whatever that was. That it was *something*, though, most Japanese believed. Department experts were full of this subject. *Nihon-jin-ron*, the theory of Japanese uniqueness, was related by some to the mastery of the difficult language and the complex cerebral work this required. Some Japanese intellectuals, the *hyo-ronka*, steered the theory around Japan's dangerous new prosperity. Their chief antipathy was the *shin-jen-ron*, the *new human being*, the soft Westernised idler, adrift in a floating world whose key word was *tsu-kei-sute*, *disposable*.

Erikson, a Japanese deskman, had written out these words for Walters and given him this brief course in Japanese singularity. Walters took it, as he took much expertise, sceptically. Without knowing a word of Japanese and next to no Japanese history, he'd negotiated with Japanese officials and businessmen for decades and had come away with hundreds of agreements on everything from whaling rights to silicon chips. Of course, there was a special style of negotiation, many levels of authority and deference, there were "concessions" that weren't concessions, "agreements" that weren't agreements, there was even the excitement of a signed agreement which was sometimes a systematic postponement. Still, once you got used to all this, it had an agreeable, piquant quality, as special as bonsai trees or a Japanese inn.

The conference finished late, but the fast trains from Tokyo Station left every 15 minutes. When he and Dorothy arrived in Kyoto, it was dark and cold. Walters showed Fukuma-san's address to the taxi-driver. Still, there was some difficulty finding it; it was not well-known. The driver circled blocks and finally called Fukuma-san for directions. A cold rain started. They drove a block and saw Fukuma-san running under an umbrella. She was in kimono, slippers and white socks. Walters remembered the sweet, barely-lined face. She did not—of course—appear to remember him. Why should she?

The de-robing and de-shoeing at the entrance were complicated by bags and overcoats. Walters had forgotten how low the ceilings were, how fragile the walls and floor. He and Dorothy were upstairs in two rooms, one filled with their sleeping pads and quilts, the larger with the almost-legless table beside which were *zabuton* cushions and low-backed legless seats. Each room was more or less warmed by a gas heater.

The cold was the first problem. The Western bath and toilet were downstairs. Dorothy could do without a bath, but she did not like the Japanese toilet. A hole in the floor asked her body to do what it wasn't used to; disgust followed discomfort. If she'd been in the woods, she would have adjusted, but she wasn't and didn't. To go down the cold corridor and stairs to the Western toilet disturbed her.

Then, too, Fukuma-san went noiselessly in and out of rooms and bathrooms. At least parts of her did. A kimonoed arm, towel draped over it, would appear. After a knock they barely heard, Fukuma-san entered with bows, smiles, bowls of tea and small dishes of soaked rice and fish. "I suppose the idea is that service is invisible", said Dorothy. (This was her form of complaint.)

IN 1973, what had counted for Walters was the inn's tranquillity. Sitting cross-legged in his kimono on the *tatami*, back against the *tokonoma* alcove, he'd looked out at a twisted gingko tree abloom with gold flowers. It had seemed part of the room. After a hot bath in the steep tub, he'd been profoundly relaxed. Fukuma-san would bring him newspapers, maps of Kyoto and Nara, tea, fish, biscuits; she'd adjusted the fan, shown him the radio, the English books. The feeling was that he could have anything he wanted.

It had been a long time—no, more than that—it was the first time he could remember being actively contemplative without a specific problem. He'd logged time on beaches, rocking chairs and hammocks, but the leisure of the *ryokan* was different. He'd thought it might have something to do with the room's subtle bareness, the interaction of outside and inside.

For that ease, and for the courtesy and grace which created it, he'd come back. Now, though, it was March, not August. Paper shutters screened them from the dark exterior. They were enclosed with gas heaters,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bag racks and clothing hooks (had these been here in 1973?); and between their rooms was the cold corridor. There was still beauty, the *tokonoma* with its blue vase, a mural screen of cicadas on a blooming branch, the *tatami*; and there was Fukuma-san who plied them with delicate constancy. More tea? Biscuits? Hot bath? Shower? And what time would they like breakfast? Did they prefer Western or Japanese?

Walters hadn't remembered her asking anything in 1973.

THEIR RESERVATION was for four days. When he turned out the light in the sleeping-room, Dorothy said, "I think we'd better leave tomorrow."

"I suppose so", he said. ("Oh, my", he thought. "What will Fukuma-san think?") Her last appearance had been with the house guest-book.

"Would prease sign?" She held the large book for them with the inquisitive deference that seemed an apology for existence. For Walters, the gesture conjured up that diplomatic delicacy which he admired even when it frustrated negotiations. Under the last name in the book, "Toby Jenkins, Hong Kong, 15 January 1987", Walters wrote "Mr and Mrs H. L. Walters, 8 March 1987". Unless there were guests who didn't, wouldn't or couldn't sign their names, the Walters were Fukuma-san's first guests in almost two months.

"I'm sorry it didn't work out, Dorothy."

"I, too, dear. I'm sure the place is wonderful in summer. And I'm glad I've seen what you loved."

Walters was up before seven. He washed downstairs in the bathroom, where a kimonoed arm appeared with a fresh towel and a fluty "Good mooring. Hope srept we'?"

"Very well, thank you, Fukuma-san." Though he was a bit startled by the be-kimonoed, vocal arm.

"And missus? Eat now?"

"I think she'll sleep a while. I'd love some breakfast."

When the trayful of boiled eggs, rice gruel, dishes of vegetal and doughy oddities and tea appeared, he said, "I'm afraid we have to cut short our stay in Kyoto, Fukuma-san. It's a shame to have had so little time, but it's been lovely to see you again. Did you know I was here back in 1973?"

He saw not the slightest sign of perturbation in the delicate, gentle face. If anything, her smile was exceptionally deep.

"Oh, thank you", she said. Was it for the fact that he'd returned to her house? Or, if she doubted that, for the graciousness of his invention? Whatever, her graciousness concealed the embarrassment of the broken reservation.

"I hope we'll return before long."

"Thank you, thank you. Sha' core taxi?"

"That would be very nice. I would like to walk around the neighbourhood for an hour or two first. I remember how lovely it is up here."

"Taxi ten o'crock?"

"Thank you, Fukuma-san. That would be fine."

Upstairs, he told the waking Dorothy he was going to walk around for a while. "She'll give you breakfast in the other room. I told her we had to go back. She was perfectly understanding. I said I'd been here before, and that we both looked forward to returning. I think that saved face."

It was bright and nippy. The tiny wooden houses with their black and white wooden signs in *hiragana* and Roman letters looked like old guild shops. Crooked trees twisted in tiny yards. Here and there were hydrant-shaped stone shrines, buddhas, bodhisattvas. Quiet, remote, graceful. At the end of the street was the arch of the Kodaiji Temple. In front of the central shrine, an old woman in black *tanzen* kimono pulled the bell-cord, clapped and bowed for the spirits. Downhill was a sign, "HOTEL US-YASAKA". It stood over a six-storey concrete affair with glass doors and plants. Inside was a small marble lobby; behind the reception desk, a man in a blue blazer.

"Do you speak English?" Walters asked him.

'A rittle."

"Do—you—have—a—room—for—myself—and—my—wife?" Walters held up two fingers.

The man handed him a sheet with a price list. After ten minutes of slow talk and pointing, Walters made the man understand that he and his wife would be back at ten o'clock, and that if they liked the room, they'd take it for three nights. The man wanted him to pay now for all three, but Walters walked out saying he'd be back shortly. (Dorothy might not want to stay in Kyoto.)

AT TEN, Fukuma-san walked them to the taxi, and, smiling, waved goodbye till it turned the corner, where Walters handed the driver the US-YASAKA flier and indicated that they wanted to go there, not the station. The driver showed no surprise or disappointment that they were going only 200 yards.

The room at the US-YASAKA resembled the cockpit of a spaceship: lights, music, drinks and snacks were governed by a large keyboard between their beds. This wasn't the Japan that Walters sought. Still, Kyoto was Kyoto, and there was more to it than contemplating a gingko tree. Outside the spaceship were temples, castles, villas, gardens, museums, lovely old streets, the Kamo river, the hills. As if to compensate their defection from the *ryokan*, the next days were radiant with spring.

The Walters took to the back streets, walking toward the hills down lanes coddled with blooming fruit trees. Everywhere were beautiful surprises, little spreads of quiet: rock gardens, brooks, tiny bridges, prayer trees,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sacred nooks and pagodas tucked away in groves. Gilded devils guarded recumbent gods; bells and drums erupted from closed shrines, old men contemplated rocks, uniformed high school students played soccer and baseball; adorable infants smiled and laughed at the tall Americans.

"This is the idea", said Walters. "Don't you feel splendid? Rested? Better than rested?"

"Yes."

The third day, Dorothy, a bit under the weather, stayed in bed. Walters said, "I think I'll go see Kinkakuji, The Golden Pavillion. Would you mind, dear?"

"I want you to, dear."

Across from the Yasaka Shrine, he took the Number 12 bus. He followed the route on his map. It went down Shijo-Kawaramachi, crossed the railroad tracks, turned north on Horikawa-dori, went past the Ninjo Palace, then west again on Kitaoji-dori. A half-hour trip, full of interest. Walters tried not to squirrel away calculations about traffic, commerce, the mix of old and new; he tried to bathe in the impressions. Still, he had to be alert for his stop. Just behind him sat three young women, university age. He turned around and asked, "Do you speak English?"

There was some giggling, then a pretty girl in spectacles said, "Can I he'p you?" Walters showed her the map, pointed to Kinkakuji and asked if she'd be kind enough to tell him when to get off. "I te' you, with pressure."

Relaxed again, Walters fell into thinking how happy he was, how precious the world's offerings, how lucky he was to be able to enjoy them. And Dorothy, true-blue Dorothy. How lucky to have the self-melting love for and trust in another human being. In his entire life, he could not remember having such a thought. Bad luck to count blessings. It could be a forecast of loss. A year ago, he'd come home early and heard his own voice saying, "I'll be home by nine, darling." When he came in, Dorothy blushed, then told him she'd kept messages recorded on their answering machine. She had the equivalent of a long-playing record of his messages. Now and then she played it. Would he forgive her? This fear of loss was an element now of the deep love the ageing couple had for each other.

"Prease, sir, Kinkakuji now."

WALTERS WALKED UP an oak-lined alley. Men in overalls swept the gravel with long brooms. As Walters approached, one of them, a short, squat man, stopped sweeping and came up to him.

"Excuse, Kinkakuji repair. Crosed indefinitry."

"Oh, dear. What a shame. I've come a long way. Could I just get a glimpse of it from the fence?"

The man bowed twice and said, "Very sorry. Crosed indefinitry. Nothing to see."

There were times when Walters would have been angry. He had his share of the American temper, that perpetuation of infantile anger into adulthood, but decades of diplomatic frustration had taken the starch from the temper. Frustration was not only expected, it was almost welcome; it made his services more valuable. Today he'd prided himself on taking the bus, not a taxi (let alone a car from the American Centre). He was playing the ordinary man and enjoying it. There might even be rules against upper-echelon people using public transportation. Walters was playing hooky. That counted more for him than Kinkakuji.

On the Walters' last Kyoto day it snowed. They made their way through slosh down Higashoji-dori to the National Museum, where, visibility poor, they turned too soon and found themselves in front of a huge bronze bell. Flake after thick flake piled on the dark gold bronze. It was very quiet. Snow piled on their hats and coats. For a second they looked at each other and, without saying anything, acknowledged the loveliness of the moment. It was the best of their stay.

While Dorothy took a shower, Walters decided to take pictures of besnowed Kyoto. The air was silvery with bits of evening dark. He walked uphill from the hotel to the Kodaiji Temple. Snow fell in the groins of crooked trees and on the curled struts of the shrine. By the square "n" of the Shinto archway, he snapped pictures of a woman pulling the bell-cord, clapping and bowing. She was a sporty little figure in red jacket, pants, and woollen cap with a pink ball. Sporty but dignified. As he put the camera down, she came toward him. It was Fukuma-san. A surprised but fine smile spread in her face.

"Herro. Herro", she said merrily.

He spread his own face with a smile. "How good to see you, Fukuma-san", and, bowing, moved past, the jam of deception smeared on his face.

ABOUT 15 YEARS AGO, Walters had made a public fool of himself. He'd had the bad luck to testify before a Congressional committee on a slow news day. Two days before, he'd crossed the Pacific, and though he was quick to recover from long flights, he hadn't completely recovered from this one. In addition, he hadn't adequately prepared for the hearing, and so the witty subcommittee chairman had forced him into a trap: he'd had to expose a presidential position which had been carefully veiled. It earned him and the congressman a minute of evening news time. It was the equivalent of having one's weakest moment painted into the Sistine Chapel, and Walters had never entirely recovered from it. The only comparable humiliation of his life had occurred when he was ten years old. He and his prettiest cousin, Jeanie Walters, were inspecting and caressing each other's more intimate parts when the supposedly hooked door was pushed open by Walters' father. Years later, Walters senior had told his son what a laugh he'd had about it, but there was no

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

laugh that day. These memories went through him as he walked downhill in the dark, silvery air, away from Fukuma-san's smile.

He didn't tell Dorothy he'd seen Fukuma-san until they were back in Washington. She'd known something was wrong but thought it was anxiety about ending his rare vacation. From the taxi to Kyoto Station the next day—a beautiful, summery one—they saw a grove of flowering trees.

Dorothy said, "How lucky to see cherry blossoms."

Uncharacteristically, Walters said, "All these years in Washington, I'd think you'd know cherry blossoms."

"I am a dodo. These must be avocado or persimmon." All the way back to Narita, she endured his uneasiness.

It was almost two weeks later—his uneasiness gone—that he told her about the encounter at the Temple. He'd had a long afternoon with the Far Eastern deskmen and the Deputy Secretary. (Dealing with ways of softening—and using—Congressional anger about US-Japanese trade imbalances.) In one of the easier moments, Charlie Okhosa told them how his Kyoto-born mother had handled his Kobe-born father.

"Kobe people are supposed to be excitable and pushy, port people, quick to take in, quick to dispose. Kyotans are supposedly confident ironists who've seen everything and know it passes. Mother was a good Japanese wife, but she handled my father the way the President handles his prima donnas: with jokes, smiles, letting him wear himself out. She never expressed her will, but we were all controlled by it. A great natural diplomat. I take after the old man."

At supper, Walters passed Charlie's remarks on to Dorothy and, with an *à propos*, told her about running into Fukuma-san at the Kodaiji Temple.

"I don't know which of us was more surprised. I didn't want to upset you by telling you."

"I hope she blamed me for our decamping. And for the little deceit."

"That would be just", said Walters with a smile. "I'm glad we moved. I'd have just stuck it out there—and been miserable. It was stupid to go back there anyway", meaning "back to Fukuma-san's." But, remembering that he'd gone there more for Dorothy, he threw in, "Back to the temple, a hundred yards from her house. Her own shrine. My paparazzi madness."

"We do have some wonderful pictures, though", said Dorothy, who had caught her husband's unusual indictment of her. In the habitual diplomacy of their long marriage, she ignored it.

Day of Birth

When you first see the new book—
the first copy, out and complete—
there's a great wave of joy,
you want to shout aloud "It's a boy!"
It sweeps you off your feet.

Like a new baby, just born,
rejoicing is its first effect!
It shines in pristine tints—
it's only later you check misprints
or notice any defect—

as mums check fingers and toes,
simply to see they're all there.
But, as with people, soon
the song can go a bit out of tune.
Critics of eyes and hair,

the people who say what they like,
regard it as something to *judge*,
and fair game for a sneer,
the biased assessment and the smear,
the wink and the covert nudge.

So make the most of the time
when it appears quite unspoiled.
Later, alas, for sure,
it won't seem quite so bright and pure—
but old, tired, soiled!

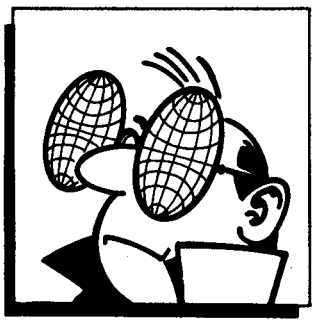
Gavin Ewart

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dan Pinck

Getting to Mrs Nestor's Farm

A Secret Agent in Wartime China



In the fall of 1942, I volunteered to serve in the US Army; I was ordered to report for duty in a letter I received in February, three weeks after the beginning of my second semester at a Virginia university and the day before our first calculus examination, which I was certain I would fail. I was relieved to join the army and to escape calculus.

I was eighteen years old that winter and I had three primary goals to achieve in the army. I wanted to see action (but not in the infantry); I hoped to win a medal for valour in combat; and I hoped to be sent to China.

Less than two years later, I was based in Kunming, flying as an observer with the 51st Fighter Group. I volunteered for this duty against the advice of my father, who had been attached to the Chemical Warfare Section during the First World War. He remained a private for four years. I was not a pilot; but as a member of the US Army Air Corps, I had been trained as a radio operator, a weather observer, and I had flown on sub patrol on B-24s along the South Atlantic coast.

One moonlit night, we located a German submarine and sank it. Radar, which had recently been installed on sub-patrol planes, spotted the submarine. After this mission, I believed that I and my fellow crew members would each receive a medal, perhaps an Air Medal. The pilot was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross, the bombardier an Air Medal, and the crew was thanked by the commanding officer.

My work in China obliged me to fly as a passenger in a fighter plane, the P-51, on reconnaissance missions along the South China coast and in Indo-China. We usually flew to the coast, looking for targets that bombers might hit a day or two later and making weather observations that the bombers could use.

I nearly died on my first mission in late February. To make room for me in the single-place fighter, several pieces of VHF (Very High Frequency) radio equipment and a SCR-522-A radio set had been removed from the deck behind the pilot's seat. A very small seat had been installed for me. I wore heavy flight-clothes on my first flight and had a hard time squeezing into the seat; I had to wiggle over the pilot's seat and under the canopy which didn't slide back far enough for me to get in easily. The sliding canopy, formed from a single piece of transparent plastic, was designed to give the best possible vision in all directions, since obstructions above, at the sides, and to the rear were eliminated. The canopy was controlled within by means of a handcrank.

The pilot said, "Just look at the back of my head and you won't get dizzy, even if we're flying inverted. . . . If we get hit by a Jap, I'll try to slow our speed and jettison the canopy. Maybe you'll be able to get out. . . . Don't get excited."

He began to close the canopy; it scraped the back of my head. "You'll have to look down", he told me. I looked down at my knees and the canopy closed.

We took off at dawn. I began to sweat about ten minutes later. I sweated profusely. I decided that I was immensely scared and that was why I was sweating. A minute later, I realised that I was not scared. I was enveloped in hot air. I tapped the pilot on his shoulder; but he couldn't turn around to see me. I told him my trouble and he handed me a rag. Performing contortions, I managed to unzip my leather jacket; but I couldn't remove it. I sweated and tried to relax. In less than two hours, we had flown well south of Nanning and I began to make notes about cloud coverage and activity on small, Japanese airfields. We flew at about 4,000 feet, except when we went lower to look at possible targets for bombers. Soon we reached Haiphong, and after a short flight we crossed the Gulf of Tonkin and circled Hainan Island at a lower altitude. I spotted a strange assemblage on Hainan Island, an apparently new building with electronic towers above it. I didn't know what it was, but I made a note of it. No Japanese planes came after us. No action at all. We were flying over a still-life landscape and I was close to fainting from the heat.

We arrived back in Kunming a little after one o'clock. I was too weak to climb out of the plane without help. The pilot cranked back the canopy and he and a mechanic helped me out. I told the mechanic about the problem; the pilot and I went to the briefing-room and we reported on our mission. Two B-24s flew to Hainan next day and bombed the structure that I had spotted. (Several weeks later, intelligence reported that it had been a newly-installed Japanese radar station, one of the first they had placed in China.) In the afternoon, the mechanic reported that the after-cooler and the coolant radiator were under my seat. The problem, he said, was that

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some heat inevitably came into my area and that there was no way to fix the elements so that normal air-flow could result. It would always be hot in there. Sorry.

During February and March, I flew eighteen missions in the piggyback P-51; to lessen the effect of the heat, I wore khaki shorts and a T-shirt. The pilot wore his heavy leather flying-outfit. The heating system worked all right for him but not for me. Before each mission, I removed my outer clothes before I got in the plane. My aspiration was to meet a Japanese plane in the air, preferably a bomber carrying a bundle of high Japanese officials, and to hit it with our six, free-firing .50 calibre machine-guns (there were three in each wing). Watching the plane spiralling down in a patch of flame, I envisioned the award of a medal: the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The closest we came to finding our Japanese plane was not close at all: at a Japanese airfield near Haiphong, we identified (or believed we did) four planes on the ground, two Kawasaki 97 Light Bombers and two Nakajima 19 Bomber-Transports parked on the runway. But they didn't come after us and we didn't go after them. During this part of the War, the Japanese had all but abandoned offensive air activity in China. The majority of their fighters and bombers had been transferred to Japanese-held islands in the Pacific. Our flights to the coast were uneventful; the landscape was as quiet and immutable as a diorama in a museum of natural history, on a quiet Sunday morning.

Two months after I had spotted the Japanese radar station on Hainan Island and after our B-24s had bombed it, the pilot of my P-51 and the two bomber pilots were awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses for their heroic activity and I received a conversational "Well done!" from the commanding officer of the 51st Fighter Group. He told me that I had contributed to the success of the mission and to American efforts against the Imperial Japanese Government. Properly, I thanked him for his commendation.

I BEGAN LOOKING FOR other things to do and heard that the Office of Strategic Services was looking for volunteers to go behind Japanese lines to provide essential intelligence services to the Allied effort. It was "dangerous work", I was told, but it sounded like a lot of fun. The Office of Strategic Services was an independent intelligence network operating throughout the world. It was founded six months before Pearl Harbor by President Franklin Roosevelt, under the management of William J. Donovan, a millionaire Wall Street lawyer who advocated American involvement in the European conflict. Known as "Wild Bill", Donovan received his nickname for his distinguished service during the First World War, in which he received America's three highest military decorations, including the Congressional Medal of Honour.

Donovan's organisation reported to President Roosevelt; the OSS had unlimited and unvouchered funds and was known to have unlimited scorn for any authority. With unlimited funds for unconventional purposes, the OSS did just about anything Donovan and his confederates wanted to do. The model for the OSS's clandestine warfare was the British "Special Operations Executive" (SOE), which had been created in 1940 to assist guerrilla movements against Germany. Joint SOE-OSS operations began in Great Britain in 1943, providing liaison between resistance movements in France and the Lowlands and, later, the invading Allied forces.

The OSS had a reputation as an élite group, unfettered by bureaucratic constraints of any kind. Through my own intelligence system, I discovered the location of OSS headquarters in Kunming. Armed with a letter from my commanding officer, attesting to my character ("He does what we ask him to—I like him fine") and my experience ("An outstanding flying observer—he provided invaluable intelligence about a Jap radar station on Hainan—always does his job, never complains"), I went to volunteer for the OSS.

I took a military bus from the airfield to downtown Kunming. It was a crisp, sunny morning, and after a short walk I reached OSS headquarters. It was a large, wooden house set in a compound, surrounded by a high wire fence. Two men with carbines guarded the entrance on the street. Both were Chinese; they stood to attention as I walked up to them. I saluted in my best military fashion. They became flustered. They put their carbines down and placed them against the fence, and saluted me as I walked past them.

I went without too great haste to the doorway of the house and walked in. No one was in sight. The doors to the first floor rooms were shut. I walked upstairs and found an open door. I walked into a large room. A colonel sat behind a fortress of a desk. He looked at me and I saluted. "Oh, hell", he said. "You don't have to do that." I said, "Yes, sir." He looked at me and said, "I don't know you." I said, "No, sir."

"I don't believe I know you", he said. "Do I?"

"No, sir", I said.

"Do you work for me?" he asked.

"No, sir", I said. "But I want to. That's why I'm here."

"How did you get in here?" he asked. "You aren't supposed to be here."

I told him I just walked up to the gate and walked in, past the two Chinese guards. I went through the building and up the stairs and here I was. I wanted to volunteer for the OSS.

"You mean you just walked up to my office with no one stopping you or asking you what you were doing here?"

"That's right", I said. "Can you tell me whom to see?"

"I guess you can see me", he said. "If you got into my office this easily, I'm certain we can use you. Who are you?"

I TOLD HIM WHO I WAS and showed him the letter from my commanding officer. He read it and said, "We do need a few men to go out East, to work under the Jap noses along the coast. Well, I'll interview you and I'll make a decision. I suspect if you have this much initiative you're the kind of man I want. Sit down."

I sat down and he barraged me with questions.

"Have you ever killed anyone, son?"

"No, sir", I said.

"Did you play football?" he asked. "I played in high school and college", I said. "What position?" he asked. "Halfback", I said. "Good", he said. "I don't want any more

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tackles and guards. They've got no imagination, no initiative."

"Were you ever scared?" he asked. "Scared?" I asked. "Scared playing football", he said. "I was usually apprehensive before the games began", I said. "But I don't remember that I was ever scared during a game." "That's good", he said. "I like that answer."

"How well do you speak Chinese?" he asked. "I don't", I answered. "Never mind", he said. "You'll have a Chinese interpreter with you. Maybe you'll learn some Chinese."

"How old are you?" he asked. "Nineteen", I said. "I'll be twenty in two months." "What was Chaucer's first name?" he asked. "Geoffrey", I said. "What did he write?" he asked. "*Canterbury Tales*", I said. "Did you study Latin?" he asked. "Yes", I said. "Can you swim?" he asked. "Yes", I said. "What does your father do?" he asked. "My dad's a chemist", I said. "Organic or inorganic?" he asked. "Organic", I said. "He's also a biochemist." "Have you ever been arrested?" he asked. "No, sir", I said.

"Do you think you know what's going on in China?" he asked. "Not really", I said, "we're winning the war." "Is Japan's defeat inevitable?" he asked. "I think it is", I said. "Do you like rice?" he asked. "Yes", I said. "Would you be scared going behind Jap lines and living alone?" he asked. "No, sir", I said. "Could you work with Chinese guerrillas?" he asked. "Yes", I said. "Have you ever met a Communist?" he asked. "No, sir", I said. "Can you spread rumours?" he asked. "Yes", I said.

"Were you taught to stifle a man?" he asked. "No, sir", I said, "I don't know what that is." "It means to kill a man without leaving any sign of what caused his death", he said. "No, I never had a course in that", I said. "Did you have parachute training?" he asked. "No", I said. "That's a small point", he said. "Is there anything in your psychological make-up that I ought to know about?" "No, sir", I said.

He said he liked my answers and that he would think about me for an hour or two and then let me know if I were accepted as an OSS agent. Meanwhile, he asked me to have lunch with his American secretary. He called her on his telephone and asked her to have lunch with me. I went to her office, introduced myself, and we went to the dining-room. During lunch, she asked me a battery of questions, so many of them and in such a rapid order that I couldn't eat any food.

Toward the end, she said, "I think you'll do fine." I mumbled a polite, hopeful response.

"The reason why I think you'll do all right is that you're young and fairly immature and not especially experienced", she said. "The reason why we need you—and I wish you to keep this to yourself—is that the two previous agents we had where you're going were much older and experienced, and they both had OSS training at the Congressional Country Club in Maryland. And both of them became scared and cracked-up. We had to take them out and send them home, in strait-jackets. It's my feeling that an agent as young as you really doesn't have the imagination or maturity to become scared and go off the deep end. When we go back to the Colonel's office, I'll tell him my opinion." The secretary and I marched back to the Colonel's office. He was seated at his desk.

"Colonel, sir", she said, "This young man's got every qualification we're looking for. I think he'll be a good agent." The Colonel thanked her, she left, and he asked me to sit down.

"Good lunch?" he asked. "Yes, sir", I said.

"Well, I've thought about you and I think you're the man we're looking for. You haven't had any training; but I can brief you in a couple of days and you'll learn everything you need to know. I think you can provide us with valuable intelligence and create a lot of confusion out East, for the Japs."

There were four straw suitcases and three large canvas bags on the floor by his desk. They hadn't been there when I left his office for lunch. "I think you'll do", he said. "Welcome aboard. You're leaving here in three days. You have valuable work to do and we need your intelligence. I'm going to review what you'll need to know. . . . Do you know how to tell the difference between a Chinese and a Jap?"

"I'm not certain", I said. "Their uniforms are different."

"The Chinese has a smooth face. The Jap runs to hair", he said. "Look at their profiles. The Chinese usually has evenly set choppers. The Jap has buck teeth. Also, the Jap is usually shorter than the Chinese; the Jap looks as if his legs are joined directly to his chest. If you catch a Jap, make him take off his socks and shoes and watch how he walks. The Chinese strides; the Jap shuffles. The Jap has a wide space between his first and second toes. Just remember the Jap has no waistline and his eyes slant toward his nose. The eyes of the Chinese are set like any of ours. Got it?"

I said I had. The Colonel lifted one of the suitcases on to his desk. He opened the suitcase and said, "These are some of the things I'm giving you—we'll review their use today and tomorrow."

He took out a cardboard-box. "We'll start with some of the simple things you'll need." He gave me the box and I read the label. "Know what these are?" he said. "They're condoms. They're one of our greatest assets in gaining the cooperation of Chinese generals and guerrilla leaders. When you reach your destination, out East, you'll see how effective they are. Chinese lead very active sex lives and since they don't have condoms here and there's a high incidence of venereal disease, well, you'll want to make presents of condoms. They'll use them themselves and share them with their staff and troops. Understand?" I said that I did.

"Okay", he said, closing the suitcase. "Now let's go to the next one. Actually, I've got two suitcases full of money for you." He put another suitcase on his desk and opened it. Bills were tightly packed, in denominations of $1,000, $500, and $100 in Chinese Nationalist money. "You've got about $4 million here, more or less, and when you get low, let me know and I'll have a courier take another shipment to you. This should last you about six or seven months. You'll pay your agents with this, buy food, and use it in any way you have to: parties for Chinese guerrillas, salaries for your interpreter and radio operator, setting up a general intelligence network. Don't waste it. And remember, next to rubbers, the Chinese like money. Got it?" I said that I had.

"Where exactly am I going?" I said.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You'll be near Hong Kong, up the coast. That's all I can tell you", he said. "You'll find out when you get there. You'll be assigned to SI, Secret Intelligence, and we want to maintain the utmost security until you reach your destination. If the weather's fair, you'll arrive by parachute. If it's overcast, well, we'll try a secret landing-field inland. That's what we'll do. You'll have on a parachute."

He walked to a closet and came back with a pistol and a short rifle. The pistol was a .45, with a long extension on it. "This is yours", he said, handing it to me. "It's got a silencer on it, so you can shoot a man without making a lot of noise. I'm also giving you a .45 calibre M-3 sub-machine-gun, with 90% noise reduction. They're great for killing people quietly, especially at night. We'll try them out tomorrow. Don't use them unless you have to. I've given you two thousand rounds of ammunition. Don't waste it. And I'll give you two more pistols for your interpreter and radio operator." He gave me the sub-machine-gun and I put it and the .45 on the floor beside the desk.

"Thank you", I said.

Then he opened a desk drawer and took out a handful of army-green metal cylinders, about three inches long, with clips; they looked like fountain-pens. "Know what these are?" he said. I said I didn't. "They're suicide pencils. We call them stingers. It's really a .22 calibre gun for short-range, one-shot use. They're factory loaded and can't be reloaded. If the Japs are about to capture you, stick one in your mouth and kill yourself. That way you won't suffer or give them any secrets, and you'll save yourself a lot of pain and grief." He gave me five boxes of the pencils; each box contained ten pencils. I wondered why I was given so many suicide pencils. I didn't expect to commit suicide more than once.

"Are you scared?" he said. I said I wasn't. "That's good", he said. "The last man we had out there, the guy you're replacing, had a nervous breakdown. We are depending on you to give us target data. Just stay loose and you'll do the job." I agreed to stay loose.

"I'd like to make you a colonel", he said. "You'll need a high rank to work well with the Chinese guerrillas. But I've already made too many colonels and, besides, you don't look a day over seventeen. I'll make you a temporary major, but I suggest you may want to be a technical representative, with the title of Mister. I'll have some calling cards printed tonight with both ranks. You can decide which one you want to use. Sometimes you'll want to say you're a representative of the Fourteenth Air Force. And I'll give you a set of major's insignia."

He decided that we'd covered enough training for the day and when he said he'd see me at nine o'clock the next morning, I thanked him and left. I wondered about my qualifications and my training; but I was enthusiastic none the less.

The next morning, the Colonel and I walked to a wooded area near the OSS compound. "Know what this is?" he said, throwing me a large ball of putty. "No", I said. "It looks like putty." He laughed and said, "Ever had any training in demolition?" "No, sir", I said. "Well", he said, "this is putty, it's called plastic, and it will blow a tree sky-high." He kneaded the putty into a rope and put it around the trunk of a small tree. He inserted a detonator in the rope and we walked quickly about 50 feet away, to await the explosion. Two minutes later, the top of the tree blew sky-high.

"Now do it yourself", he said, giving me a ball of putty and a fuse. I repeated the exercise. "Good", he said. "Now you know what demolition is. You may be ordered to blow up something some day."

We walked back to the compound and to his office. "You'll want to write about ten letters to your mother and father", he said. "We'll mail them home about one every month. We don't want them to worry or know where you are. And you won't get any mail while you're out East." He gave me some paper and envelopes and I quickly wrote the letters, dating them in successive months and informing my parents that the War was going well and that I looked forward to coming home. When I had completed this task, he gave me some code books.

"These are one-time pads", he said. "One's for decoding and one's for encoding. The name of your station will be UV2 and you will report to VTM. This is the most secret form of cryptography we have. The Japanese will never decipher your messages." In a half-hour, he showed me how to use the one-time pads. I thanked him.

He read the letters I had written to my parents. "Not very imaginative", he said. "That's good. They won't become suspicious. And you didn't tell them you were a major. That's good."

Next, two young Chinese men came into his office and the Colonel introduced us. "Hay Shum is your interpreter and Lung Chi-Wah is your radio operator. Hay was a medical student before he joined us and he speaks English pretty good." We shook hands and sat down. I liked their looks. They were older than I but only by a few years. "I've given Major Pinck all you need to have", the Colonel said. I felt like a commanding officer. "But I'll now give you a TR-1 hand generator and your schedule of transmissions. I think you'll all do fine. All of you, stay loose." He shook our hands while Hay translated his remarks for Lung. "You'll be leaving in the morning", he said. "I'll see you here at seven and then we'll drive to the airfield. Good luck."

OUR VILLAGE, Hotien, and the base of my operations behind Japanese lines, was about 120 kilometres up the coast from Hong Kong and inland a rough 30. It sprawled leisurely about 400 yards along a dirt road, from the high mud wall of the school at the north entrance to a crumbling sentry tower standing guard on the footpath to the sea. 500 persons, perhaps not that many, lived there.

A Chinese guerrilla outfit numbering about two hundred men, under the command of General Tong Pat, was based at the foot of a cone-shaped mountain only a few hundred yards from Hotien. The General was a short, bald-headed man with enthusiastic manners, and a fey air. I intended to gain his cooperation but Hay warned me not to try to do this by giving him condoms.

"He needs money for food for his men", Hay said. "But you can't make him a gift of money. He wouldn't like that. Can you play poker?" "Not very well", I said.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hay said, "Good, I know what we'll do." He decided that we would play poker with General Tong Pat, and that I would try to lose, and the General would win a lot of money. Two weeks after we reached Hotien, I invited General Tong Pat to have dinner with me at the town's best tea-shop, and after dinner I invited him to play poker with me. He accepted, we played for about an hour, and I managed to lose about $200,000 CN. The General thanked me and he invited me to play poker with him again. Thereafter, I played poker with the General every three weeks or so and, over a period of eight months, I managed to lose roughly $1,200,000 CN. Hay reported that the day after each poker session, much food was bought for the guerrillas. When they got low on food, it was time for another poker game.

General Tong Pat enjoyed visiting me in my living-room on the second floor of the Roman Catholic Mission house in Hotien, which was our residence. The Chinese Roman Catholic priest, Father Tan, did not want us to stay in the Mission, but Hay persisted. Hay told Father Tan that we were apostles, fighting godless Japanese. The Mission was the only building in town surrounded by four walls.

The guerrillas were poorly equipped and General Tong received less pay in a month from the Chinese Nationalist Government than I paid Lung, our radio operator, each week. The guerrillas wore only coolie-blue shorts, and carried single Czechoslovakian hand-grenades that resembled bowling-pins. Whenever a skirmish with Japanese appeared imminent, I lent General Tong Pat one of my .45s. Together, he and his troops and Hay and I would leave Hotien and play hide-and-seek with the enemy, seldom firing a shot unless we were assured of a victory.

During harvest time, and sometimes more frequently, the Japanese would come inland from garrisons in the sea towns and forage for a few days in the river valley near our village. On their return to the garrisons, the Japanese would bring back rice and pigs and women. When the rice harvest had been well-hidden by the farmers, the Japanese would replace the rice with more women and they would eat and rape their way back to the sea towns. Despite orders from the Chinese Nationalist command, more than 600 miles away from us, not to annoy the Japanese—it was feared, as General Tong Pat said, that the Japanese would take revenge by killing women and children—the Chinese guerrillas and I would ambush Japanese patrols. We lost only two men in all of our ventures, and we took out more than two hundred. The Japanese never deviated from their customary operations despite our activities; and, after the enemy had left, we would return to our village and have a party at the best tea-shop, get drunk on rice wine and Hong Kong aerated water, and toast our victory.

One morning following a victory party, Hay told me that he had overheard General Tong Pat and his top aide Colonel Chung talking about me. The General insisted that although I looked younger than his youngest son, he thought I must be at least a major. He believed that the United States would not send any one of a lesser rank to perform my duties in China. Colonel Chung insisted that I was no more than 18. Hay said this was serious and we had to do something to correct it in a hurry.

"The General said that you are a good shot", Hay told me. "But Colonel Chung said that didn't prove how old you were."

I suggested that I wear my major's insignia; Hay said that would not be a good policy, since he had already introduced me to them as Mister, holding the rank of technical representative of the Fourteenth Air Force and appointed to my position by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Everyone in China, it was assumed, knew about the Fourteenth Air Force, the Flying Tigers, and President Roosevelt. Hay advised that there was no way to let them know that we worked for the Office of Strategic Services or that we were doing anything more than collecting target information on the Japanese along the coast and providing weather reports. Since this was all we were doing, I didn't see the logic of his argument. General Tong knew what we did and why we did it, and he shared intelligence with us whenever he had any.

Hay decided that I would have a birthday party to celebrate my 26th birthday; and I concurred. General Tong Pat and his staff would be invited, and Hay prepared formal invitations for them. This sounded like an effective ploy. The announcement firmly stated that I was soon to be 26 years old.

The party was held at the best tea-shop; following dinner, Hay proposed a toast to me, which was subscribed to by everyone. After many bottoms-up, Hay confided to me that he had made a gross error. In his toast, he had said I was 23. General Tong Pat and his staff were confused, Hay said, since it had been announced that it was my 26th birthday. Colonel Chung told Hay that he didn't think I was over 17; and General Tong Pat said how could I be 26 when I didn't have to shave? Actually, I had to shave once a week. General Tong Pat asked me if I would like to be a major-general in the Chinese Nationalist Army. Hay said he thought I should accept, since this was a generous, friendly solution. I accepted. A few days later, General Tong Pat came to visit me at the Mission. He gave me various uniform insignia, his own army hat, and a certificate on linen attesting to my rank in the Chinese army. This warranted a quick poker game, during which I lost $125,000 CN.

"*Daw-jay*, General", General Tong Pat said to me, "thank you". Thereafter, whenever we met each other, General Tong Pat offered the salutation, "*Lay ho ma*, General". How are you?

Sometimes I wore my general's insignia and sometimes I didn't. I kept all of my insignia in a lacquer box.

As THE SOLE American in my area near Hong Kong, my instructions were to gather and transmit intelligence and meteorological data to our forces in western China. I employed about 60 Chinese agents who gathered military and political information in the Japanese-held coastal towns from Swatow down the coast to Hong Kong. Much of the information they brought back concerned the movement of troops on land as well as coastal shipping; as a result of this information, much damage was done by American planes that flew out from several inland bases, many hundreds of Japanese were killed, and about 15 Japanese ships were sunk.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I was certain that I would receive a high award for my work.

During the spring of the last year of the War my agents succeeded in giving me information in quantity about Japanese displacements and troop movements along the coast. Our airplanes sank three small warships and four fishing boats manned by Japanese in one three-day period, and for several weeks I was relaying "OP" intelligence reports to headquarters. The "OP" classification meant that it was "hot intelligence" and required quick action by the Air Corps. In late spring I received a message from headquarters: "Congratulations on recent messages re targets and intelligence. We appreciate your efforts."

This pleased Hay and me immensely, and I asked my agents to double their efforts to supply us with good information. Soon after, we received a report on a new Japanese supply base in Swabue, a small sea-town. This new base contained 700 troops, coastal artillery, a radar station, trucks, ammunition, and 540 drums of gasoline. The gasoline was stored in a school in the centre of town. Hay and I began encoding the information on a one-time pad to send to headquarters and I envisioned another commendation. When we finished encoding the message, Hay asked me to wait a day before sending it. Had I considered, Hay asked me, the number of women and children who would be killed by an air attack on the school? After all, he pointed out, it was mainly Chinese civilians who would be killed and maimed, not the Japanese; and, besides, even on their most successful forages inland, the Japanese never killed more than 10 or 15 persons. I said (frankly, I had not considered these implications) that I thought we were under orders to report this information. Hay repeated his argument.

The next morning I decided that Hay was right, and did not relay the message. Hay had been a medical student at Lingnan University before he joined me, and before the War he had lived in Hong Kong where he had attended English schools. He was precise, intelligent and generous and I admired his skill at negotiating our success in the area. When I told him that he was precisely right in his attitude about saving lives, he said, "That is good. I will see that you receive recognition for your wise leadership and support for the Chinese people." I didn't ask him what he intended to do.

During the succeeding weeks of spring and into July, we censored the intelligence that we sent inland. If there was any doubt about the nature of civilian casualties, we simply forgot the intelligence. We began asking our agents to bring us back fresh seafood from their coastal excursions. They didn't comprehend this request, but they were paid well and they performed their shopping missions with verve. We even had shark fins which made a delicious soup. A message came from headquarters that said:

> "Air Force complaining about lack of good directions in pinpointing targets. If you don't give proper directions and appearances your target info worthless. Quality of your intelligence has been high. We will give you every assistance we can in order for you to give us your best and an increasing volume of quality intelligence. Your station vital to success. Let us increase our accomplishments and speed victory."

Several weeks later, the War was over. I might have been court-martialled if it had lasted another few months. I felt slightly guilty about this for many years and told only my wife about my cutting off intelligence. My feelings of guilt lasted until the Viet Nam war, when I realised that I had done the right thing.

A week before the War ended, a courier came to the Mission with a large, flat envelope for Hay. He opened it and gave me an elaborate scroll.

"This is for you", he said. "It is a reward for your leadership. Lingnan University has awarded you a Doctorate in Government and History for your undisputed intelligence and contribution to the Chinese people. . . ."

DURING THE LATER PART of the War, OSS headquarters asked me to send back more economic information. I didn't send economic information, because I didn't quite know what economics was. I had tried to read Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*; that was the extent of my knowledge. I did relay the price of fish along the coast and produce costs in the local markets. Headquarters wanted to know what the *agio* was. I didn't know what *agio* meant and because I was too embarrassed to ask, I sent back no further economic information.

A few months before the end of hostilities, I was requested by headquarters to send back a map by courier noting all of the Japanese emplacements at Haifung, a sea town with an excellent harbour. We asked our agents to scout out the town and the harbour, and we accumulated a lot of data. Neither Hay nor I knew how to make a map. We had never made one; I had not been briefed on this at all during my two-days' OSS training. But I did have *The Boy Scout Handbook* with me.

An elderly professor of biology at college had advised me to take a copy of the *Handbook* with me if I went overseas in the army, for he had worked as a public health officer in the Philippines in years past and he believed that the *Handbook* was an indispensable resource: survival hints for hot and cold climates, in the snow and in the jungle, medicinal tips, communications systems; and a lot more. I remembered, and carried a copy of the book with me when I went to China.

Hay and I turned to a two-page spread of a map titled "GETTING TO MRS NESTOR'S FARM". This map served as a guide to making our own map of the Japanese emplacements which we sent to headquarters and received a commendation on our information.

We had heard rumours, picked up by our agents along the coast, that an American invasion was going to take place at Haifung. I queried headquarters about the landing, but received no response. Several years after the War, I discovered that a landing had been planned and that men and ships were already at sea and heading for China when the Japanese surrendered. The name of the task force was "Operation Marigold". Presumably OSS Headquarters did not want me to know about it in case I was captured before the landing and decided not to commit suicide.

One young American naval intelligence officer and his interpreter, our agents reported, had travelled to Haifung

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

three weeks before the landing. The Japanese found them in the town. The interpreter was forced to dig a grave and the Japanese buried him alive in it. The American was shipped to a Japanese base in Hong Kong. Hay reported that, after their capture, the Japanese had a standing offer of $1,200,000 for my capture alive; $500,000, if dead. He had not told me about this before; he didn't want me to worry. But he did suggest that I spend four days in the Mission's WC, when he heard that a small group of Japanese spies were in Hotien. I hid in the loo for four days, armed with a .45. Then Hay indicated that I could come out.

"General Tong hears about the Japs and he wants to protect you. He and his men found the Japs and killed them", Hay said. We decided to have a grand poker game. I lost $300,000 CN to the general.

"*To hsieh, to hsieh*, General", General Tong Pat said to me. Thank you, thank you very much. "*Mei-kuo ting hao*", he said, as he left for his compound. America is swell.

One evening, after the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as General Tong Pat, Hay and I were sipping bitter Swatow tea, the General wanted to know if I thought there would be an American landing on the China coast.

"Tell the General I think the War will be over very soon", I said to Hay.

"The General says that you are wrong. The news of the atom bomb does not impress him."

"Tell him not to worry", I said, indifferently. "If it's over during the night, I'll fire a shot from my pistol to let him know."

After General Tong Pat left to return to his guerrillas, I went to bed. My bed consisted of four narrow boards resting on two horses. There was no mattress. Such sleeping facilities resulted in an insomnia of sorts, prompting nightly visits to our small but powerful radio to listen to news reports. When I went to the radio that night, I heard, much to my dismay, that Admiral Mountbatten had said it was folly to think the atom bomb meant a quick end to the War. I tried to find a more encouraging news broadcast from a different station, but failed.

The next night I awoke around 3.15 in the morning, and went to the radio, put on the earphones, turned the dial. The first words I heard were ". . . jubilation in Chungking". There was also jubilation in Paris and New York—the War was over. I ran out to the balcony, shouted the news to Hay and fired two rounds from my .45, aiming just above the silhouette of the highest mountain. Why just fire a revolver, I thought, when I could send the news to General Tong Pat with a merry instrument? The rope that swayed the Mission's bell ran across the balcony. I began pulling the rope furiously. Hay, sceptical to the core, went to the radio. Figures scurried through the streets. I rang the bell again, louder. The streets seemed to fill up in a few minutes, and emptied as rapidly. There was a general exodus from our town, and in the fleeing crowd I noticed, to my bafflement, some of our bodyguards. Shortly after, General Tong Pat came puffing up, grabbed the rope roughly from my hand and stopped the bell-ringing. Hay received a torrent of words from the General. When General Tong Pat finished, Hay turned to me.

"The General says ringing of bell at night is signal that bandits come to Hotien. That's why everybody runs out of town!"

I sputtered an apology. There was nothing to do, I was told, nothing at all to do. The poor townfolk would huddle overnight in the hills and return to their homes in the morning. The Chinese priest, Father Tan, appeared in the doorway of the balcony, rubbing sleep from his eyes. He came outside and spoke to Hay. Hay grinned and said to me, "Father Tan thinks there are no bandits. He says you are drunk—"

"—Tell him the War is over."

Hay spoke a minute to Father Tan, who suddenly raised his hands, as if to say "enough" and then grasped our hands and said to me, "*Bonus filius. Malus pater.*"

"*Non*", I said. "*Malus filius. Bonus pater.*"

He smiled and went back to bed.

THE WAR ENDED and I was discharged from the service in early January 1946. I returned to my college several weeks later to begin the spring term and to finish my freshman courses. I hoped that I would be excused from calculus; when I tried to sneak out of this required course, the Dean called me to his office and asked me why I thought I didn't need to study calculus. I told him that I had served as a Major-General as well as a Major, and that a knowledge of mathematics would have been of no help to me in those positions, and that I didn't see why I had to take a course in which I exhibited a profound stupidity. He complimented me on my War record.

"The War's over now", he said. "You are a freshman, rules are rules, and you have to take calculus if you want to graduate from this university."

I took calculus and with much tutoring I passed the course. Three-and-a-half years later I was awarded my degree.

About two years ago, I attended a two-day reunion of OSS veterans at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington. Several persons who later served as Directors of the Central Intelligence Agency, the successor to the Wartime OSS, relived their OSS adventures and exchanged stories with about 75 men and women. The then-current CIA Director William J. Casey, former Directors William E. Colby and Richard Helms, and a former CIA Deputy Director, Ray S. Cline, told us their stories and we told them ours. Since no former agent present had shared experiences during the War, no one could dispute anyone's recollections. I claimed to have been one of the youngest, if not the youngest, Major-General during World War II. No one doubted me. Some of the stories were even more outlandish; I accepted every person's history as they accepted mine.

A year ago, the mailman on our street in Boston delivered a small package. It had been sent from Taiwan. I opened it and found a handsome medal in a green leather case. A letter to me from an official of the Government of the Republic of China said, "The Government takes pleasure in sending you herewith a China War Memorial Medal which the Government of the Republic of China has especially decreed as a token of its appreciation for the contributions made by a few Americans like your good self to our joint effort in the China theatre during World War II."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kevin Crossley-Holland

Oenone in January

January 1st: Beginning

Fingers chapped, the clean year picked and scraped
to a glint. Halley's Comet a milk burr.
Over the long field silhouettes, guffaws,
resolutions. Then the boisterous wind.

January 2nd: Ages

She carts, cherishes and upbraids her dolls,
sowing the seeds of her own motherhood.
She is every age already. You look
as she sleeps: creaseless ancient Infanta.

January 3rd: Pretence

You core it and she eats the skin, the flesh
and then the hole! When she covers her eyes
she is hidden. She deceives you with pearls.
You hear her laughter in the swollen stream.

January 4th: Taming

Buttons, clips, pins—she always takes her tithe.
She drills tins and bottles. Nothing counter
passes without some question or comment.
This fierce attempt on the unwieldy world!

January 5th: Absences

Not maybes—those tassels whiskers, that lump
in the mattress tigerish—but maybe nots:
Can't see them! Can't hear them! Am I alone?
Bawling existentialist before dawn.

January 6th: Animateur

Spangles on her pane. Icicles wrist-thick,
thick as ropes and candid. Dark clots knitted
up in the elms. The whole frieze in need of
its *animateur*. She opens one eye.

January 7th: Imagining

You smile, murmur *mouse*, think she clambers up
to share one pillow and rehearse the day. . . .
Gulls circle mewing. You turn to the clock,
and it's not even time for her to wake.

January 8th: Invocation

All morning the sleet slanted in. She stripped
to the waist and donned seven necklaces.
Doily, felt-tips (heavy duty): she raised
a rose garden and entered it, singing.

January 9th: Numbers

One more, no more. . . . In her reckoning, what
is ever quite complete? *Where has he went?*
It's a shame they can't come both. I am three
years old; when will I be all the numbers?

January 10th: Hair

A thousand clefs of curls. Her mother laughs
and says *corn-gold* (her own is titian).
Bright cloud, you think; grace notes of the skylark,
ocean, elixir. . . . *Nope*, she says. *Ginger!*

January 11th: Half-Brother

She knows it's almost time for him to go.
Silver chatterbox, she trots at his heels,
dragoons him into last loud games. He smiles,
devoted, tolerant; a kind of god.

January 12th: Recognition

Good morning path! Oh! good morning puddle!
Blithe bubble all the way to Sunday School.
St Francis' sister, greeting one and all
as newborn and equal and integral.

January 13th: Rites

She takes your lobes between fingers and thumbs,
gently massages; rubs noses; warbles
into one ear. Close your eyes. Celebrate
the siren rites of the true Daughterhood!

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

January 14th: Rivals
Each used to undivided attention;
each queering the other's pitch. Carnations
blaze in the razor sunlight. Two *divas*
(old and young) glaring across their breakfasts!

January 15th: Chastening
That weal on the back of her hand your hand
inflicted, and the doleful cutting tears,
part sting, part shock, and part calculation:
you know it was right and feel quite stricken.

January 16th: Nightsounds
Uhu of the barn owl; cock pheasant's creak;
hackle and cackle; our lyric willow;
and always this ancient house, its whispers
and predictions. One listener: her heart.

January 17th: Dangers
That tinny sound as she tries out thin ice!
In its shine you see capsizes, crashes,
every kind of accident, then, far worse,
the smiling drivers. . . . Take steps. And take steps.

January 18th: Joy
Lily, she thought; she thought, *tiger. And this*
is my own daughter; dayspring and dancer
and gleam. The late primrose light faded from
the little room. Still she looked; still she shone.

January 19th: Mother!
The least knock or scratch or ache and you are
supernumerary. Back to the source:
mātr, méter, mōdor, mutter, máthair. . . .
She cries and reaches out. The woman smiles.

January 20th: Dog
Beau Brummel and Barnum and Loyal Sam!
He's her chief barker and mooning paleface,
her game opponent, grinning accomplice.
She tightens the leash: *Jealous! You're jealous!*

January 21st: Imitation
Wading round the room in black stilettos;
intent, loading a pipette; kneading dough,
sleeves rolled up: flatterer in rehearsal,
instinct with longing to learn, to succeed.

January 22nd: Lexicon
Why not can't I do it? Of course I can.
Slobber-de-bob! Isgusting! There's water
in frogtime. I want to read peoplest books.
I'll run you down. What colour is your talk?

January 23rd: Sunrise
You left both ladies in the pink, finger-
tips at their temples. Each stone and each leaf
was locked in bristling frost; the whole circuit
of the sky down-pillows and pear-blossom.

January 24th: Rules
Playing percentage is unknown to her.
Draws you wide, kicks the chalk, always ends up
in dock and nettles. Proper anarchist,
years of markings stretched out in front of her.

January 25th: Spring?
Sunlight. Hedgerows and high-wavers all stripped,
all winter-bleached and ready to begin.
The dog waltzes over the fields. She primes
her shining pots with earth and warm gravel.

January 26th: Promises
Her rainbow segments dance; her cardboard clock
with its bold promise pulses. Poor sleeper,
turn, twitch, and twist, whisper of Horrid Things.
Slowly her dove unfurls morning-white wings.

January 27th: Offenders
Her sequinned, squinting elephant exiled
on the landing is the offending book
your devoted grandmother blue-pencilled
and filleted. Each day it grows larger.

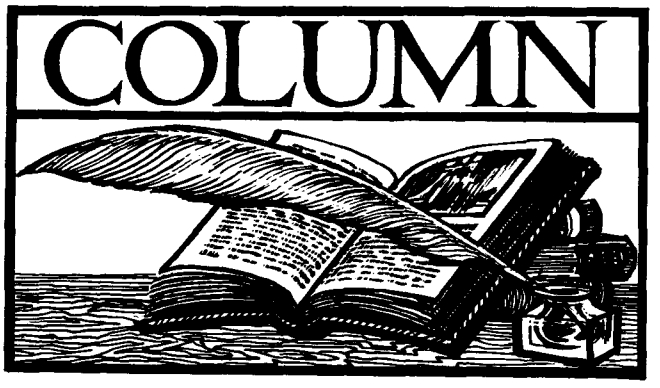
January 28th: Proposals
Hot and hectic and armed with a posse
of proposals: *pick-stickers; picklecheese;*
house-of-cards; Humpty; stand-on-my-head. . . .
You, niggard, had one and only one: *bed!*

January 29th: There
There it snows. Here it rains quiet always-rain
dropping into your skull. And there the north
and east winds blow. Here the colours hang limp.
There the rose. Here—how sharply you miss her.

January 30th: Commitment
Hide your eyes! She tears across the room, throws
herself on to the Chesterfield, face down,
enters a white shining darkness: no game,
no commitment ever more serious.

January 31st: Goodbye
The world is opening under our feet;
you stoop, sweep her up, you kiss her goodbye.
Three and already a breaker of hearts:
I won't see you ever again, will I?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"WE SHOULD LIKE to apologise, Ladies and Gentlemen, for the late arrival of the incoming opera." No one expected any such announcement for the UK première of *David et Jonathas* in the Barbican Hall, London, this spring: but it might have been in order. Marc-Antoine Charpentier wrote the work just 300 years ago.

That it took so long to cross the Channel may be a mark of how difficult cultural communication is—especially between countries as old and proud and insular as Britain and France. It was no doubt to remedy such mutual isolation that the Barbican, with the French Foreign Ministry and assorted sponsors including Eurotunnel, recently mounted a two-month season, "*Images de France*", of which Charpentier's Biblical opera was a part.

Music was the core of the programme, with anniversaries this year for Bizet and Poulenc, as well as for the first performance, 75 years ago, of *The Rite of Spring*. There were side-shows, as it were: art and photographs, popular music, jazz, cookery, literary debate, children's plays, Breton folk music, Baroque dance, and a quiz. But what interested me—partly as a movie buff, but for other reasons too—was the choice of the French films on display.

They included some undoubted classics, by Renoir, Bresson, Jean-Pierre Melville, Jacques Becker, and Jacques Tati. With Louis Malle's *L'Ascenseur pour l'Echafaud*, they just about earned their description in the programme, "The Golden Age to the New Wave". Even so, almost all of them were pictures long familiar on the screens of film clubs. Their very titles—*Le Sang d'un Poète, Pépé le Moko, Le Jour se Lève, Casque d'Or*—might have appeared on student noticeboards in any campus novel to pin down a period and evoke an atmosphere of wistful Gallicism, marooned in the sticks of the Midlands or the Middle West.

Et in Astoria ego. I, too, recall evenings on hard seats in steaming duffle-coats, watching a 16-mm version of some grainy, silent masterpiece. I remember bursting out of film-society Russian mornings, talking fake Slavonic with like-minded fans. I still respond to those archetypal French melodramas, full of mist and back-lighting, in which taciturn gangsters with hearts of gold, and cigarettes wagging with every grimace, were doomed by frizzy-haired blonde minxes for whom they took one last, fatal chance, while a string orchestra on the soundtrack played resolutely flat.

This, I suspect, is one of the "*Images de France*" that the Barbican season will have helped perpetuate. How many bemused British tourists, landing in today's much glitzier France, will go looking for René Clair's Paris, Jean Gabin's picturesque underworld, Arletty's *café-concert*? No matter that later films of the French "Golden Age" carried these elements beyond parody; no matter that the whole sad, sentimental, soft-focus world they portrayed was an invention of their script-writers: they influenced the way that foreigners saw France—and the way it was seen by the French themselves.

Self-image is obviously important in any national consciousness. How else could the phrase "un-American activities" have any meaning? And in France, from Marcel Carné movies to *Astérix*, popular culture both reflects and enhances some favourite stereotypes. The predominance of Paris; the importance of the soil, of solid nourishment, of wine, of physical love; respect for analytical intelligence, articulacy, speedy wit; the need for privacy; the comradeship of *les gars*; the certainty that France, however dwarfed by the Superpowers, will somehow win out by a combination of vigour, agility, and guile. Some of these, you may notice, are shared by the British—but not all.

Trawling for unconscious assumptions is a tricky business in any country. Anthropologists are sometimes shaken by what they bring to light. Feeling "superior" to their subject-matter, with their radio sets, notebooks, sophistication, and return tickets home, they may suddenly find that their hosts feel sorry for them, "superior" in their turn. Asking questions, they may be told lies—not from malice, but because to tell the truth would be impolite. Offered a dish, they may give offence by confessing to a sated appetite; themselves offering something only once, and not insisting after an initial refusal, they may equally seem boorish and mean.

In "primitive" societies, exotic and unfamiliar, the traveller at least conceives that he may face such problems. In a non-European language, he or she may be alert to semantic pitfalls—the lack of a concept, or the existence of one hitherto unknown. With strange clothing or housing as a perpetual reminder, it's easier to avoid assuming that others are just like oneself.

FEW OF THESE CONSTRAINTS and warning signals apply among Westerners, Europeans and Americans alike. Similar in dress, technology, climate, architecture and, increasingly, food and drink, we can soon be misled into believing that our languages and thoughts need only to be translated accurately for full understanding to be possible. In politics, of course, we recognise that nations have different priorities, and/or perceive them differently: we acknowledge the relevance, if not the permanent validity, of the hard dictum that countries have permanent interests, not permanent allies. In private affairs, however, our expectations are less modest. Most of us, in our naive heart of hearts, are probably tempted by the sentimental belief that "if only ordinary people could get together, the world would be a better and more peaceful place".

A glance at the Middle East shows what nonsense this is. Ordinary people, there, are getting together enthusiastically, armed to the teeth. And even in peaceful democracies there

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are unexpected problems. They arise not only between Blacks or Browns and Whites, but among people of the same skin-colour and even the same nationality. Many of the problems are due not to conflicts of interest, but to misunderstanding of other people's "bizarre" ways.

Difficulties of this sort seem especially common between "the Americans" and "the French". An ethnologist who has studied their culture-contact at close quarters is Raymonde Carroll, a Frenchwoman married to an American and living in the United States. After much puzzlement, and hearing many complaints from similar mixed families, she gradually realised that the cases of friction she encountered were similar to those she had experienced on Nukuoro, the Pacific atoll where she and her husband had done three years' field-work. She began to document her own and others' discoveries. The result, *Evidences invisibles*, is an illuminating book.[1]

LIKE CHARITY, Mrs Carroll begins at home. Some French people, she says, are astonished on their first visit to an American house, when their hosts take them on a guided tour. For Americans, this is a way of making the guest feel at home: to the French, it looks like "showing off". One French informant added that he had never been allowed in his grandmother's kitchen in France, although he lunched with her once a week. A French household, in other words, contains tacit barriers understood and respected by everyone. French guests in an American household, unthinkingly applying the same taboo and keeping to their own rooms rather than socialising, risk seeming stand-offish—although they're simply doing what their hosts urge on them, i.e. to make themselves at home.

The next pitfall is conversation. French people often accuse Americans of being "boring", of "answering a question by giving a lecture". Americans, on their side, resent the way that French people "continually interrupt". Raymonde Carroll sees the mutual reproach as a contrast between two views of what a conversation should be. For Americans, it means an exchange of information: for many French people, it's more like table-tennis without a score—batting the ball quickly to and fro, the purpose being to weave a web of bright *badinage*. Similarly, French people often misunderstand—and build too much upon—the American (and, in Britain, the rural) convention that strangers may greet each other in passing. In a crowded train, Raymonde Carroll believes, "a Frenchman would re-establish space around him by keeping silent, whereas an American would do so by talking."

Children are a further source of mutual incomprehension. Dennis the Menace is alive and well and behaving badly (in French eyes) all over the United States: in France, American students complain of being treated "like children"—French children—because the régime seems interfering and strict.

[1] *Evidences invisibles: Américains et Français au quotidien*. By RAYMONDE CARROLL. Editions du Seuil, FF89.

'England's most intelligent conservative periodical . . .'

(Russell Kirk, *The Wanderer*)

The appearance of a journal that is avowedly right-wing has marked an epoch in British politics. Despite vehement persecution of its contributors, *The Salisbury Review* has carried the torch of intellectual conservatism in all its different shades and from all parts of the world.

Contributors include Enoch Powell, F.A. Hayek, Ralph Harris, E.J. Mishan, Václav Havel, P.T. Bauer, Dan Jacobson, Anthony Flew and C.H. Sisson.

Whatever your politics, if you value serious discussion you will appreciate *The Salisbury Review* – the first British journal to put the case for an outlook which has the intellectual misfortune to be in power.

THE SALISBURY REVIEW
7, Lord North Street, London S.W.1

Please open my one year's subscription.
I enclose a cheque for £12 ($25) made payable to *The Salisbury Review.*

NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
.....
.....

Published quarterly in September, December, March and June.
Editor: Roger Scruton.

The *Salisbury Review*
A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF CONSERVATIVE THOUGHT

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

French students in the United States, on the contrary, are surprised when their American colleagues argue with the teacher. Here, I suspect, Raymonde Carroll's picture of what goes on in France may have grown anachronistic. All the signs are that Denys la Menace has arrived.

"Honey"—"sweetheart"—"darling"—"sugar": terms of endearment between partners in America may also jar on a French ear. Sometimes, it's true, verbal saccharine is a prelude to divorce or (as in the theatre) the equivalent of a button on a fencing foil. But even stable, mature American couples tend to sound more demonstrative than their French equivalents, whose manuals of etiquette discourage public fuss. This sometimes puzzles foreigners, struck by the greedy public embraces exchanged by the Parisian young. But there's a clear difference between courtship rituals and married behaviour. Here, too, contrasting conventions can lead to embarrassment. Raymonde Carroll confesses that her husband "wanted to disappear under the table" when she discussed marriage with guests at dinner: although a fellow anthropologist, he found it out of key with American customs—the guests might suspect marital discord, it seems. And, although Mrs Carroll omits it, kissing is a further minefield. If you're a woman and you kiss a Frenchman on the lips, you may have some unarmed combat ahead.

American friendship, Raymonde Carroll suggests, seems to be more fragile than what she expects in France. In the United States, she says, friends worry more about imposing on each other or creating an unequal relationship; and parents strongly encourage their children to "make friends". At the same time, however, small dinner parties in the United States are not necessarily more intimate then larger gatherings—which makes some French guests think Americans "superficial". Here, I'm not sure I agree with her: the problem surely arises from different connotations and usages of the word "friend".

Similar contrasts emerge in the use of the telephone. For some French people, the ideal phone would be a transmitter whereby one could call out, but not be telephoned—whereas Americans seem to have no such complex at all. They give their full names when answering or calling—which in France would indicate formality and distance, not simply helpful habit. Among close French friends or family, it's true, the telephone is a welcome gadget: but otherwise it seems to stand for uncertainty, disquiet, threat, intrusion, upset. I'm sure I've said "I'm sorry to bother you" far more often in French than in English; and Raymonde Carroll makes me see why.

She devotes a further chapter to—breakages. These, she claims, are taken far more seriously in America than in France. If you stain your host's carpet, tear a book, or smash a vase in America, you must do your utmost to repair the damage or replace the object. To me, as an Englishman, this seems normal. In France, supposedly, such minor damage may elicit apologies and a promise of remedy—but no serious action: the American-style response is thought over-insistent, even materialist. Mrs Carroll does her best to resolve the contradiction by arguing that both Americans and French are putting a premium on friendship: the Americans by paying their real debts, the French by showing confidence that nothing can harm the relationship. Personally, I find it hard to be so detached.

Raymonde Carroll's final example of terrain for misunderstanding is the quest for information. In the United States, to find out something, one picks up the telephone and asks for help. Usually, the response is amiable and the information ample. French visitors find it hard to get used to the system. Diffident about asking for data, they feel swamped by its volume when it comes—maps, plans, lists, even sketches of how to reach a wedding. The American in France, on the other hand, tells endless horror stories of "being sent from one office to another without ever getting a satisfactory reply". The reason for the discrepancy? According to Mrs Carroll, contrasting attitudes to self-sufficiency. In America, she argues, this is highly prized: hence the reliance on printed texts and maps. In France, self-sufficiency carries a faint overtone of reproach, of not allowing others to help one. There, seeking information, the first impulse is to turn to a friend or colleague, creating a private network alongside or even against the official public establishment.

TENTATIVELY, Mrs Carroll ends with some observations on money and sex—claiming that boasts about the former are more taboo in France, and about the latter more taboo in the United States. Again, I'm not sure whether I agree with her. Much depends on the company one keeps. Nor, finally, am I at all sure that "explaining" national contrasts anthropologically also explains them away, or debars one from judging one form of behaviour "better"—e.g. kinder or more efficient—than another.

Given the choice, I would endorse French respect for privacy; American politeness in not interrupting; French rigour in child guidance; American warmth between married couples, even in public; French concern for "real" friendship; American matter-of-factness about the telephone but French dislike of intruding with it; American care with others' property; and American readiness to provide information with a smile. I omit sex and money: should anyone boast about either?

As you see, America comes out one ahead. French friends would no doubt claim this as a case of perfidious Albion, acting as a Trojan Horse for the United States' cultural invasion of Europe. To me, of course, it betokens sheer British fair-mindedness. We do still find ourselves torn between continental and transatlantic norms; but in important respects we share presuppositions with our neighbours on the far side of the Channel—even if it does take 300 years to bring an opera across.

M

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ernst Bloch

Philosopher of "Hope"—By J. P. Stern

HEGEL's *Zeitgeist* is a vengeful spirit. There is ghostly poetic justice in the fact that the intellectual life of Western Germany was dominated, in its first 30 years at all events, by the Jewish Marxist outcasts of the Third Reich—Ernst Bloch (1885-1977), Georg Lukács (1885-1971), Max Horkheimer (1885-1973), Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979), T. W. Adorno (1903-1969), and by the enigmatic heritage of Walter Benjamin (1892-1940). It is they who inspired the students' rebellion of 1968, and even today the socio-political disputes in the West German universities take place in an area staked out by their writings.

Still, the laugh is not on the Germans alone. Anyone old-fashioned enough to believe that tolerance is a Jewish virtue will be in for a surprise: the one thing these intellectuals have in common with each other (and indeed with the Germany they so precipitously left in the 1930s) is their deep, undisguised contempt for the liberal mind. Western liberal democracy in particular they regarded as a "post-" or "crypto-Fascist" makeshift compromise. The fact that those who returned to Germany were greatly acclaimed and given the highest academic positions seems to have made little difference to their views. After the trauma of exile, they turned out to be valiant biters of the hand that fed them. Readers who have no German but are interested in the convolutions of Marxism in our time need no longer take their reputations for granted. With this painstaking, helpfully annotated and rebarbatively literal translation of Ernst Bloch's *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*,[1] the last major work of the German Marxist corpus is now available in English; how readable they will find the book is another question.

Like all his revolutionary colleagues, Ernst Bloch was brought up in the comfortable security of a middle-class home, his father being a senior official of the Imperial Railways.[2] Proletarian Ludwigshafen in the Rhineland-Palatinate, where Bloch was born in 1885, with its heavy chemical industry, contrasted starkly with Mannheim, its twin city—a model of 18th-century town planning, with residential palace, famous Jesuit church, and superb library—where he went to school.

The daily walk across the Rhine, from working-class tenements to the quarters of the mercantile bourgeoisie, provided the boy with the adversarial theme of a lifetime. The Dutch sailors in the harbour bars filled his imagination with exotic tales; Furtwängler, Weingarten, and Kleiber were among the conductors whose performances he attended at the Mannheim theatre. An unimpressive school record gives little idea of the boy's real interests. From the age of seventeen, when Bloch was exchanging letters with Ernst Mach and other leading philosophers of the day, he was obsessed with the idea of a philosophical system, a total account of the world which would accommodate all experience, actual and visionary alike, within one mode of discourse.

An early glimpse of his future task is recorded in a note that speaks of "my discovery of the 'Not-yet-Conscious' [*des Noch-Nicht-Bewussten*], the kinship of its content with what is similarly latent in the world. In creative work especially", writes the 22-year old university student:

> *"Besonders in der schöpferischen Arbeit wird eine eindrucksvolle Grenze überschritten, die ich als Übergangsstelle zum noch nicht Bewussten bezeichne. Mühe, Dunkel, krachendes Eis, Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt liegen um diese Stelle. An ihr hebt sich, bei gelingendem Durchbruch, das Land wo noch niemand war, ja das selber noch niemals war. Das den Menschen braucht, Wanderer, Kompass, Tiefe im Land zugleich."*
>
> ". . . an impressive boundary is crossed, which I call the point of the transition of the Not-Yet-Conscious. Strenuous effort, cracking ice, becalmed sea and happy voyage are gathered around this point. Here, when the breakthrough succeeds, rises the land where no one has been, the land that has never been. That needs man the wanderer, compass, depth in the landscape. . . ."

[1] *The Principle of Hope*. By ERNST BLOCH. Translated and introduced by NEVILLE PLAICE, STEPHEN PLAICE, and PAUL KNIGHT. Three volumes, 1,420 pp. M.I.T. Press, $95.00; Basil Blackwell, £120.00.

[2] My biographical data are taken from Silvia Markun, *Ernst Bloch* (Rowohlt, 1977).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The hyphenation, the eccentric punctuation, the rousing yet adventitious mixture of concepts and metaphors—all these will be the stock-in-trade of Bloch's philosophical style over the next seven decades. What will be added to this half discursive, half poetic Expressionist notion of "the Not-Yet" is its politicisation in terms of a romantic, fictionalised Marxism. *That* is to be "the land where no one has been".

IN HIS WIDE-RANGING university studies (which included music and some physics) at Würzburg, Munich, and Berlin, Bloch focused on the history of the philosophy of matter from Aristotle through Lucretius to Karl Marx. When his friend Bertolt Brecht observed ironically that "*bei uns* even materialism is abstract",[3] he might have had Bloch in mind. For Bloch is concerned to "extend" materialism as an account of the human and natural world, so as to include in it the dreams and constructions of scientific, religious, and political utopias of all ages. 1918 saw the publication of his first major book, *The Spirit of Utopia*, which contains Bloch's first attempt to conjoin socialism with the messianic spirit of the Bible, Marx with the biblical Apocalypse. This was followed in 1921 by his reconstruction of the chiliastic beliefs of Thomas Münzer, a revolutionary follower and antagonist of Martin Luther. In presenting Münzer as a "theurgic" theologian, Bloch is anticipating a major theme of the third volume of *The Principle of Hope*—the connectedness and interaction of earthly utopian aspirations with Christian doctrine, the ardour ("boiling") of human freedom under divine equanimity.

Apart from participating in the liberal-patriotic youth movement, Bloch seems never to have engaged in any public political activity. The bulk of his *oeuvre* was written in the 1920s and early '30s in Southern Germany and Switzerland, and made little impact outside the coteries of Marxist intellectuals. What the metaphysician of materialism actually lived on is not clear. In 1913 he married Else von Stritzky, a sculptress from Riga; on her death in 1921 and after a brief marriage to a painter from Frankfurt he lived with Karola Piotrkowska, a young Polish student of architecture, whom he married in 1934. These were the years of his friendship with Brecht, Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno and, above all, Georg Lukács (whose influential *History and Class Consciousness* was published in 1923). Lukács's dogmatic Marxism and his rejection of German Expressionism, which he was later to associate with National Socialism, led to a break lasting many years.

A MONTH AFTER Hitler came to power Ernst Bloch left Germany, moving from Switzerland to Vienna and then to Paris, living a hand-to-mouth existence as a collaborator on several exile publications. He never visited the Soviet Union, preferring to write his apologia for the Moscow trials of 1936-37 in Prague. He arrived in New York in 1938, and settled first in New Hampshire, then in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where, between 1942 and 1947, *The Principle of Hope* was completed. Like Walter Benjamin (who committed suicide on his flight from German-occupied France) Bloch received no help from Max Horkheimer's Institute for Social Research in New York, and indeed suffered great hardship. The household (which now included two children) was supported by Karola Bloch, who worked first as a waitress, then as an architect's assistant in Boston.

Though he had never been a Communist party member, he experienced some difficulty and delay in acquiring American citizenship. However, the translators' claim (p. xxiv) that "he was forced to undergo an oral examination on the American Constitution" demonstrates only their ignorance of US immigration procedures, not any confirmation of Bloch's belief that there is really no difference between "the American way of life" and "the Fascist *Volksgemeinschaft*" (p. 442). In brief (and Bloch is never brief), his eleven years in America left him with the impression of "a society stripped of any will to truth" (p. 276).

In 1949, now 64, Bloch took up his first teaching post, an East German professorship of philosophy at the Karl Marx University of Leipzig. The tall, vigorous old man with the heavy shock of grey hair and thick spectacles soon proved to be a charismatic teacher and a fearless, brilliantly articulate debater, drawing large and enthusiastic student audiences. But, alas, his time in the German Democratic Republic overlapped with the confused period of "the Thaw" and "de-Stalinisation" leading up to and following the 20th Party Congress, the Hungarian Uprising, and the consolidation of Tito's power in Yugoslavia—all contributing to an ideological retrenchment of the embattled Ulbricht régime.

The publication in East Berlin of the first two volumes of *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* and Bloch's 70th birthday were still accompanied by official celebrations and honours; but soon the predictable "criticisms" began to make his position difficult. Academic stooges of the Government accused him of "subjectivism", revisionism and excessive emphasis on "the Hegelian heritage in Marxism", and—gravest indictment of all—of bourgeois "mysticism". Finally, Walter Ulbricht himself joined the attack with a few simple home truths about "inadequate practical concern for the working classes. . . ." Bloch's closest disciples were jailed, and he himself pensioned off. The charges are worth listing because they are largely true.

On 13 August 1961 the Berlin Wall went up, and Bloch, who had been staying with Wieland Wagner in Bayreuth, decided not to return to Leipzig, preferring "*das viele Licht der mehreren und doch allesamt verrotteten Berlin W* (the many lights of the many wholly rotten West Berlins"; my translation). The letter in which he announced his decision to the President of the East German Academy is couched in the simple, not exactly original terms of that "bourgeois liberalism" which is denounced in *The Principle of Hope*. Friends secured him a visiting professorship at Tübingen, and there he continued teaching and arguing the views that had brought about his isolation and enforced silence. It speaks well for the West German academics that, in the face of considerable hostility from the conservative press and politicians, they had enough confidence in their own brand of democracy to give him a safe and secure berth.

[3] Bertolt Brecht, *Kleines Organon für das Theater* (1953), no. 75.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Among the friends Bloch made in those last years in Tübingen was the student leader Rudi Dutschke, who had left East Germany at the same time as Bloch. Separated by 55 years, the two men were bound by surprisingly close affinities of temperament and mind.[4] Both were immensely gifted speakers, and both were deeply troubled by the division between philosophical theory and social and political practice. Yet while Bloch was content to fudge the difference by devising the weasel word "theory-practice (*Theorie-Praxis*)", Dutschke entered the political scene and paid for it with his life. Both read the Gospels as the charter of an ethical and social revolution, the initial impetus of which Bloch placed in the Mosaic Exodus. Dutschke's statement (made six years before he met Bloch), "I take Jesus's words, 'My Kingdom is not of this world' only in an immanent sense", is identical with Bloch's claim (p. 500, Bloch's italics), *à propos* the same text (*John* 15:5), that

> "'This world' is synonymous with that which now exists, the 'present aeon', whereas 'the other world' is synonymous with the 'future aeon'; [and this] is not a geographical division between this world and the beyond, but *a chronologically successive division in the same arena, situated here below*."

Although his eyesight was rapidly failing, Bloch was able to finish the revision of his *oeuvre* for a complete edition (amounting to eighteen volumes). He died in Tübingen in August 1977, aged 92.

All in all, it was not a bad life. Combining great intellectual energy and single-mindedness with the barging temperament of an ideologue, he lived through the disasters of the 1930s yet never had to take political responsibility for his views. The key of a prison door never turned behind him; he never heard a shot fired in anger. Compared with the overwhelming majority of his European contemporaries, he could surely look back on a life of good fortune; and, however peculiar his chosen task, he never had to work at any other.

When considering its politics, a reader of *The Principle of Hope* should bear in mind that none of it was written under duress. American readers especially may be in for a shock. So hostile is Bloch to the American scene that it comes across as a huge, undifferentiated, industrial swamp with bits of barbed wire sticking out into the poisonous gases hovering above it. "It goes without saying" (to use one of his favourite turns) that he denies its contribution to "the theory-practice" of democratic government, though (p. 962) "the young American states" are credited obscurely with "cut-price freedom". His model democracy is the USSR.

However, if his interest in US institutions is perfunctory, his praise of the Soviet Union is equally unencumbered by any detailed knowledge of its life and social arrangements. Most of the quotations from Stalin have been omitted from the West German (Suhrkamp) edition on which this translation is based.[5] Bloch's main source of information seems to be Lenin, who died in 1924. Apart from some purple patches and conventional references to the 19th-century classics, a quotation from Chernyshevsky, and the usual Marxist attacks on the anarchist Bakunin, Bloch's knowledge of Russia is confined to lyrical guff, presumably at second hand, about Russian folk dancing (as opposed to American "vomit", p. 393-4); about the unique stoicism and courage of "the Red Heroes", and the upright posture of "Soviet Man". Of Stalin's liquidation of the Ukrainian and Russian peasantry or the murders at Katyn we hear not a word—but then, in an interview of 1965, he explains his earlier silence by the manifest untruth that "one did not know much about Stalin's *Schrecklichkeiten*".[6]

To these less than illuminating observations about the great Tocquevillean theme of America and Russia should be added Bloch's equally perfunctory treatment of German history. The aim is to ignore the recent past lest it should prove an obstacle on the way to utopia's greatest good. Thus, the Third Reich figures as no more than a mistake "which does not further the dialectics of history" (p. 310); Hitler is a pawn of international capitalism, no more; and about the enthusiasm with which the German munitions workers acclaimed him, all the way to the end of 1944, Bloch maintains a dignified silence.[7] Add to this some snide remarks about Israeli bankers, "Tel Aviv capitalism" and Bloch's unfortunate manner of quoting anti-Semitic remarks without doing much to dissociate himself from them (known in literary theory as "free indirect style"), and you get the pattern from which the Baader-Meinhof group drew their picture of the world. All this suggests that, whatever may be the merit of Bloch's work, it does not lie in its political insights.

IN ALL ITS straggling, messy immensity, *The Principle of Hope* is one of those all-about-everything books characteristic of German culture over the last 150 years.[8] However, unlike its direct predecessor, Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, whose panoramic perspective it adopts, Bloch's *magnum opus* is ruthlessly optimistic. What it does is to reverse Spengler's world-historical scheme by

---

[4] The story of their friendship is told in Jürgen Miermeister, *Rudi Dutschke* (Rowohlt, 1986).

[5] These omissions are noted by Jürgen Habermas in his essay, "Ein marxistischer Schelling", in *Über Ernst Bloch* (Frankfurt, 1968), p. 77. They are not mentioned in the translators' preliminaries to what they call "the first full [English] translation" of Bloch's work.

[6] Ernst Bloch and Fritz Vilmar, "Ein Gespräch über ungelöste Aufgaben der sozialistischen Theorie", in *Über Ernst Bloch*, p. 87. The rest of Bloch's defence consists of two predictable claims. First that "capitalist historiography is so partial, and Stalin's horrors fitted its scheme so hideously well, that there were scientific-methodological reasons why one could not take [the news of those horrors] at face value".

His second (characteristically German) excuse is that he and his like had no choice and *could not afford* not to side with the Soviet Union.

[7] The reason for Bloch's virtual silence on the subject of the Third Reich is simple. Like many other Marxists, he seems never to have acknowledged the fact of Hitler's unparalleled popularity among all classes, including the German "proletariat".

[8] Apart from Spengler, a list of such books written in this century would include Ludwig Klages's *Spirit as Adversary of the Soul* (1929-33); Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* (c. 1920, uncompleted at Musil's death in 1942); Alfred Weber's *Farewell to Recent History* (1946); Hans Freyer's *Theory of the Present Age* (1956); and Elias Canetti's *Crowds and Power* (1960).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turning "*Weltangst*"—the source, for Spengler, of all creativeness—into "hope". In this placing of "hope" at the very centre of a history, anthropology, and phenomenology of mankind lies the originality of Bloch's undertaking.

The principle which guides the five sections (arranged in 55 chapters) is simple enough. All history and the entire contemporary world are divided along the lines of a chiliastic Marxism. "Hope" resides in every scientific, artistic, political, or religious event that can be interpreted, however doubtfully, as a guide to or promise of a "Marxist" utopia. The rest is irredeemably condemned.

After a rather jolly opening section on the value of daydreams of a better future (contrasted with nocturnal dreams, which are seen as retrospective and therefore regressive), the argument settles down to an extended quasi-Freudian discussion of the unconscious. The motto cited, somewhat dubiously, by Bloch from the "bourgeois *déclassé*" Viennese clinics—"*Economic and social questions cannot be treated here*" (p. 66)—is rejected. The motor of the unconscious is *hunger*, for it is hunger alone (not Freud's libido) which "transforms itself . . . into an explosive force against the prison of deprivation". A section on anticipating consciousness—the discovery and notation "of the forward-looking Not-Yet-Conscious or of Forward Dawning [*der Dämmerung nach vorwärts*]" as the essence of "reality as process" is followed by a pious exegetic exercise on Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach", and by another long section on the trivial but redeemable hopes of the everyday. This includes a fairy-tale-like discussion of fairy tales; reflections on travel and on the theatre seen not as an "illusion" but as "pre-appearance of the ideal" ("Every great drama is great because it is transparent to the future", p. 428); and a defence of "the Happy End" against its usurpation and corruption by Hollywood.

Since the utopia Bloch is advocating is not a state of "being" but of "becoming", it is never described in detail—to do so, he argues, would be to foreclose its possibilities. Similarly, any attempt to abolish authority is rejected as "putschism" since (in Engels's phrase) "the state will wither away" of its own accord. The reign of utopia will come when the threefold division which is the cause of all evil in our world—the division of classes, of labour, and the immanence/transcendence division of Christian belief—is abolished.

A section on the history of social utopias, from Plato through St Augustine, Joachim di Fiore, and Thomas More, to Francis Bacon, Saint Simon, Moses Hess, and William Morris, shows which aspects of these earlier utopias anticipate Bloch's future state. Zamyatin's and Orwell's dystopias are not mentioned. Seeing that here the higher flights of Bloch's fanciful style are largely avoided, this turns out to be one of the most illuminating sections of the book. But then, in the chapters that follow—on the role of nature, of non-mathematical science, and of music in the building of that utopia—the characteristic jumble of reified images and metaphorised concepts gradually takes over.

Mere verbal litter is spread over the thinnest bits of the system, especially where the oblique suggestion is made that the true socialist (or perhaps communist?) is a physiologically different type from the pathetic *petit-bourgeois* (the Goebbels-like passage on p. 956 is not the only one that is much softened in the translation), and that disease and death itself may "perhaps . . . possibly . . . one day" be abolished along with the class system. Bloch does not say in so many words that capitalist wickedness is the cause of cancer, contenting himself with calling the growth of cancer cells "imperialist" (p. 465). Many passages in the book, including much amateurish patter on medicine, sport, and technology, and a painful chapter on humour as "the smile of pre-appearance", do no more than fill in vacant spots in the system. They remind at least one reader of Lucky's contribution to the wisdom of mankind (in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*), in that famous monologue beginning with "Given the existence as uttered in the public works of Puncher and Wattman . . .". But no Pozzo appears, to stop the flow of words.

In the last section of Bloch's megatome the wishful images of the privileged moment are invoked in terms of Faust's wager with Mephistopheles. That moment in time and out of time of which Faust will be willing to say, "Stay a while, thou art so fair", is offered as the nearest thing that words can convey of the content of Bloch's utopia. Finally, Don Quixote and Don Juan, Faust and *Fidelio*, Christ and Karl Marx provide the central images (or are they "concepts"?) of a narrative that has by now abandoned most of its claim to being analytical and become largely a recital of archetypal scenes and persons lyrically evoked.

TRUE "HOPE" is only hope for the right and possible thing. Central to the first volume, and one of the most interesting theoretical parts of the book, is Bloch's analysis (pp. 224-248) of the two meanings of the word "possible".

In traditional philosophical discussions of possibility, he claims, knowing or not knowing what was the case in the past was confused with knowing or not knowing the conditions under which something is certain to be the case in the future. To avoid this confusion, we must distinguish between possibility that is confined to "the singularity and immediacy of an accident or a stroke of luck", and possibility that is "a capability of being an other", which implies purposeful and informed change. But since all "true" or "real" change is seen here as change in the direction of the greatest good, this second "possibility" soon shrinks into and becomes identical with "certain hope". And for this reason, too—since for Bloch, if not for the rest of us, all "true" change is toward classless utopia—the philosophers of feudal and early capitalist times had a vested interest in perpetuating the traditional confusion. What is missing in Bloch's entire discussion of possibility—*et pour cause*—is the recognition that, in any ordinary view of it, "the possible" is never single.

Hitler's rule was a mistake, representing change only in the wrong sense of the word. By reducing "change" to "change for the better", Bloch is proposing to eat his cake and have it too. The notion of "hope" which he asserts, illustrates, and supports by endless quotations (some of them seriously inaccurate) and interpretations (some of them disingenuous) is characterised in the following ways. It must be hope for a *possible* better future in the second of the two meanings of the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

word. It must be *grounded in the present*, in what we know now, but directed toward a better thing. It must have the fervour and seriousness of religious faith but, transcending what we are, it must not aim at "transcendence". It must be not vague but *certain* hope, in the way that propositions of science are certain. It is not a passing mood but *a clear programme* and consistent goal, involving all that is positive in our moods and feelings ("premonition" is identical with "utopian certainty", p. 826); it must bear *the stimulus* toward its attainment within itself.

This hope will be entertained by some of mankind, called unblushingly "the People" or "the Proletariat", but it is absolutely beyond the reach of the rest. In this hope all that is valid in all theory and practice is united. There can be nothing squeamish about the way it is to be realised—bloody revolution is the most likely way of attaining it, since the entire Western world is not just hope*less* but actively opposed to that attainment. All good and great art either shows the way toward the fulfilment of that hope or offers examples of it.[9]

In sum: hope as Bloch presents it is not just a concept or a feeling or the content of a man's imagination—it is all these things and more. It is *one of the forms of our perception*, on a par with the Kantian forms of space, time, and causality (pp. 241 ff).[10] *Our* forms of perception? Well—not really ours, but the perception of the Marxist part of the world, in which utopia "has started to begin" being fulfilled (p. 582, etc.).

THIS LIST OF WHAT Bloch subsumes under "hope" is problematic enough, but it is only one part of his total assertion. Most of the characteristics I have enumerated are in turn qualified. The certainty with which hope is to be endowed *cannot* be like the certainties of our natural sciences because *they* are the products of capitalism. The "facts" of capitalist science are tainted by the purpose for which they were discovered; in the West all discoveries, let alone inventions, we are told, are determined by a social purpose of one kind or another—that purpose is the maintenance of the capitalist *status quo* and the intimidation of those who oppose and wish to alter it.

Hope must be grounded in the present—but only in those parts of the present which are harbingers of the good future, the utopia of a non-adversarial society in which the three divisions I have mentioned (of class, of labour, and of immanence/transcendence) have been abolished. True hope must bear the stimulus towards its attainment within itself—but not to the extent that it becomes an end-in-itself and thus loses its quality of being a means toward the good end.

The present, Bloch reluctantly concedes, is grounded in the past. But the past is its *true* ground only in those of its aspects (Bloch here conflates the consciously tainted practice of Marxist historiography with Nietzsche's guileless but equally unacceptable theory of "critical history") which offer an "extended line" toward the utopian future. (Thus the Hitler-Stalin friendship pact of August 1939 is not a part of the historical past.) Moreover, the present is, for Bloch, a "dark" region, less knowable than either the past or the future. The task of selecting those aspects of the past and present which are to be the proper grounds for hope is simple enough: it is outlined in Bloch's unquestioning acceptance of Marxist-Leninist party dogma. When Jürgen Habermas writes of his disappointment "that Bloch does not ground the Marxist method epistemologically",[11] he understates Bloch's dogmatism. It is not just "the method" but the very premise of the Marxist argument, the class theory, that is left unexamined. And criticism of that theory, or any suggestion that it may have been invalidated by the course of technology which separates us from Marx, is swept aside as hostile propaganda and part of the Cold War.

Where recent French and (in its wake) American philosophical thought has offered to take the drama out of human experience by reducing all life and history to a set of contingent metaphors, Bloch proceeds in the opposite direction. He rejects those metaphors that do not fit his scheme as "illusions", and hypostatizes the rest in a mystique and mist of literalness. By-passing the two major critiques—Kant's and Wittgenstein's—of reason and language, i.e. of reasonable utterance, he is trying to set up and sustain a mystical view of human destiny by means of a "scientific" argument (p. 1367). He re-enacts the old dream of German Romanticism by politicising it.

WHAT—IF ANYTHING—CAN BE salvaged from such a convolute? Does anything of importance emerge from this chaotic combination of dogma, self-indulgence, and Expressionist rhetoric? Neither Bloch's procedure nor his conclusions qualify as reasonable utterance. The importance and interest of the work lie in the questions it asks, in Bloch's remarkable ability to raise some of the problems that disturb us because we need to find new solutions to them, or at least improve on the solutions we have relied on so far. From our discussion of that oxymoron, "certain hope", two such problems emerge: one concerns the role of nature in our scientific age; the other relates to the religious foundation of our ethics.

The first of these problems Bloch subsumes under Marx's heading of "the humanisation of nature". His revision of the natural sciences follows Goethe's well-known distaste for Newtonian physics. Bloch reformulates this by attacking Kant's observation that an enquiry is scientific to the extent that it is amenable to quantification and mathematical procedures. Mathematics is seen as the descendant of the profit-

[9] Bloch's treatment of Bertolt Brecht (pp. 413 ff) is characteristic of his ruthless way of subordinating art, too, to his do-it-yourself ideology. He concludes a discussion of the commonplaces of Brechtian dramatic theory with the claim that "Brecht's theatre seeks a mode of action in which there is only Communist conclusiveness of conduct. . . ."

The opposite is the case. The dilemma—between justice and mercy, or again between truth and accommodation—of the great plays of Brecht's maturity remains unresolved. Non-resolution is Brecht's great theatrical discovery.

[10] Bloch's treatment of Kant is (as far as I know) unique, being almost entirely confined to Kant's *pre-* and *post-critical* writings; which is as though one were to cite Isaac Newton as an authority on the dating of the Old Testament.

[11] Jürgen Habermas, "Ein marxistischer Schelling", in *Über Ernst Bloch*.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and-loss calculations of clever merchants and traders (p. 1,348). So radical is Bloch's rejection of mathematics that it leads him to argue against its connections with music (in the tradition based on the Pythagorean "*music of the spheres*" and in Kepler's "*harmonia mundi*"), because it leads (p. 1,073) to the anti-human conception of modern music. Of course, one may sympathise with Ulrich, the hero of Musil's all-about-everything novel, when he proclaims that he likes mathematics because of the people who don't. Apart from that, though, any reader who is unbefuddled by Bloch's style will rightly think that a mere liking for or dislike of mathematics is, to one side of biographical considerations, a blatant irrelevance.

Bloch's rejection, however, is based on an ethical argument. It is the "abstractness" of mathematical procedures, their being unavailable to sense perception, which intimidates us and allows these procedures and their application to follow ethically indifferent paths to unforeseen and unintended ends. Uncontrolled and apparently uncontrollable, this is "capitalist science"—and as such, a reflection of the chaotic society that has created it.

In this criticism of our science Bloch retraces an anxiety with which we, or at least the non-scientists among us, are entirely familiar. We are (as the saying goes) "overwhelmed by science", intimidated and overawed by what we do not understand. The remedy he proposes (with some help from a misreading of Bacon[12]) is hardly less abstract. "Nature" is no longer to be the object of scientific enquiry, but is to be itself the subject (the mystical "*natura naturans*") from which scientific and human insights and progress will originate. Hence Bloch's serious concern with alchemy and astrology as "sciences" of phenomena which are supposed to teach man not through what he learns from observation and experiment, but by "speaking" to him "directly" and disclosing their own laws.

In other words: quantification is to give way to hermeneutics, the "science" of interpreting difficult signs—the science of "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,/Sermons in stones, and good in everything . . ." which is unlikely to flourish outside the Forest of Arden. Bloch makes a "progressive" plea on behalf of this "science"; yet it does not seem particularly "reactionary" for Socrates to be telling us that we can learn a lot from people in the market square but nothing from trees; or for St Augustine (in a passage not quoted by Bloch) to ridicule such anthropomorphising as absurd heresy.[13]

Even though the anachronistic remedy Bloch proposes will not find many takers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, whose Press has published this book, the problem to which he draws our attention is real enough. We do indeed treat nature as a mere object of experiment and exploitation; and the dangers inherent in the uncontrolled course of our scientific investigations go largely unheeded.

WHAT EMERGES at the end of Bloch's "scientific" discussion is a natural world from which all contingency is excluded, and a human world without mistakes and without any freedom of individual choice in anything we do. In this perfect world no allowance is made for the spontaneous, single-minded pursuit of discrete, partial knowledge. The "mystical" philosopher who speaks to us from these pages will not admit, and seems to have no understanding of, an activity that bears its own *telos* within itself. He roundly condemns every philosopher and artist, every scientist and inventor, who is intent on less than the total view. There is no place in his scheme for all those who follow their freely chosen, self-imposed task, who may not even be conscious of (because they are not particularly interested in) a use beyond that which they aim at, a purpose beyond that which they pursue. Such gifted persons may hope that the eventual uses of what they have understood or invented will be good uses; but their achievements are purchased at the price of intentness on one goal, and disinterestedness in respect of all other goals. Where the divison of labour and the unexpected, unplanned uses of the products of labour are seen as evils (pp. 970-71), creativity is surely at an end. That, in the West at all events, is what the history of art, science, and techology teaches us—*any* history that is not falsified by a millennial perspective.

The choice that *The Principle of Hope* enables us to see, more clearly perhaps than any other book I know, is not a choice that Bloch offers. It is this: recognising that such self-propelled activities may lead to evil ends, are the ends to be prevented by proscribing them . . . or by proscribing the activities that lead to them?

The former—the prevention of evil ends, as in the destruction of our natural environment—must be the aim of our laws. The latter—the suppression of such activities before they have got under way—presupposes a dictatorship, not indeed of "the proletariat" but of the Lenins and Stalins, and of the Blochs and Marcuses too . . . the dictatorship of the guardians of the public good, whose authority rests on the claim that they know *all*—and, knowing all, know best.

However odd Bloch's discussion of "nature as subject" may be, it does vouchsafe us a piece of knowledge about ourselves and our place in the natural world—a knowledge we recognise as woefully incomplete. From this admission of incomplete knowledge Bloch does not exempt himself. His claims on behalf of "*natura naturans*" are, for once, not stentorian but tentative. But this only makes his claims of having a solution to every one of our social and political problems all

---

[12] Bacon writes that "Natural Magic . . . containing certain credulous and superstitious conceits . . ." is as far from "the truth of nature" as any fairy-tale (*The Advancement of Learning*, ed. Kitchin, 1973, p. 100). Bloch "quotes" Bacon as saying:

> "When magic is united with science, then this *natural magic* will accomplish deeds as different from earlier superstitious experiments as are the real deeds of Caesar from the imaginary Arthurs of the Round Table."
>
> *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, p. 759, my translation.

Instead of translating Bloch's "quotation", the translators surmise that he must have used "an inferior translation". Bacon's actual argument is diametrically opposed to Bloch's.

[13] See St Augustine's *enarratio* of the 144th Psalm, in *Opera Ommia* (ed. Migne, 1844), vol. IV, pp. 1,887 ff.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the more damaging. *There* he admits to no possible ignorance, *there* all problems have already been "potentially and latently" solved, and all non-Marxist solutions are rejected. "Where only one flag is the right one, choosing ceases. . . ."

Democratic pluralism, however, is based on the admission of ignorance. We simply do not know how our neighbours will behave in new, unprecedented situations (or even in those that have well-known precedents). We must face the consequences of unforeseen, spontaneous behaviour; and where these consequences are destructive we must devise laws whose delay will not be too long in catching up with those consequences. All this is no more than the opening move in a discussion which Bloch never enters. Indeed he cannot enter it without abandoning his central utopian claim to "certain hope", the oxymoron on which his entire argument rests. Without that claim, his "hope" would be no more than hope is for all of us—an uncertain prospect, open to a variety of possible fulfilments, or to none at all.

THE OTHER LESSON this book offers to the reader who has the stamina to persevere to its end, concerns the religious foundation of our ethical beliefs. Here, again, it is the question Bloch poses that matters. Is our predominantly atheist world capable of salvaging, if not the objects of religious belief, at least its ardour and seriousness? Is the "humanisation of the divine" he proposes any more meaningful than his notion of "certain hope"?

The argument opens with the claim (a half-truth, at best) that every religion and every prophetic or messianic figure arises in response to a specific social need, to the "order" (*Auftrag*) given by society. The "*Urkommunismus*" of the nomadic tribes of the Old Testament and the "exodus religion" of Moses are continued in Christianity's communal faith—"*Liebeskommunismus*"—in succour of the underprivileged and oppressed. This view is just about compatible with orthodox Marxism, but Bloch's speculation does not stop here. Taking his cue from *Revelation* 21:5—"Behold, I make all things new"—he constructs (p. 1,270) "a new God, who [is] absolutely strange (*der neue Gott, der schlechthin fremde*)" at the meeting place of the human and the divine. Where the Gospels contradict such a view, Bloch draws on his considerable Biblical learning to reject "the eschatology of two kingdoms" as a part of Christ's "real" teaching (p. 580). Christ is, thus, presented as living proof of man's ability to "transcend" his own human condition without intervention from "transcendence".

Bloch's "humanisation of the divine (*die Humanisierung der Götter*)" takes some pretty fantastic forms. It includes such memorable pronouncements as "The end of the tunnel [i.e. of anti-Semitism] is in sight, certainly not from Palestine but from Moscow (*Ein Ende des Tunnels ist in Sicht; gewiss nicht von Palästina her, aber von Moskau—ubi Lenin, ibi Jerusalem*)" (p. 610), and the claim that "the Bolshevist fulfilment of Communism" is part of "the age-old fight for God".[14] I wonder whether the Protestant parsons who have been set agog by Ernst Bloch's "theology" remember Hitler's claim that he was acting on orders from the Almighty.

In this realm of fantasy it does not, in the end, matter greatly what qualities Bloch attributes to "the greatest good" of that classless society we are certain to enjoy at the victorious conclusion of Marxism's holy war. Nor does it make much difference whether or not he succeeds in giving his notion of that meeting-place of the human and the divine a modicum of coherence. The excuse for—or, at least, the explanation of—his wildly politicised and socialised interpretation of Christ and the Gospels does not lie in his utopia, but in our sins of omission.

THROUGHOUT the work, and especially in its last section, there are passages where Bloch's ruthless optimism gives way to its obverse—Marx's searing indictment of the conditions in which man becomes "a debased . . . an enslaved . . . a forlorn . . . a contemptible being" (pp. 265, 622, 1,355-59). Bloch accepts Marx's diagnosis and the accusation that issues from it, but then turns the tables on Marxism *and* on liberal democracy, by showing up the incoherence in both. Unlike any other Marxist I know, Bloch acknowledges that the accusation derives its strength wholly from its appeal to "traditional Christian values"—the values of a Biblical faith which Marxism seeks to extirpate.

Our attitude, of course, is more tolerant. We neither deny nor proscribe "the *novum*" in the teaching of the New Testament, but we acknowledge the Gospels' insistence on the value and dignity of the individual, "the metaphysical single soul" (p. 623), in our rhetoric and in little else. But we do hardly more than that. As long as the appeal to traditional values goes unheeded in our world, *ollas podridas* like Bloch's work will be written to remind us of it.

[14] ". . . *so kehrt doch gerade auch im bolschewistischen Vollzug des Marxismus der alte gotteskämpferische, der taboritisch-joachitische Typus des radikalen Täufertums erkennbar zurück. . . .*" *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, vol. I, p. 679.

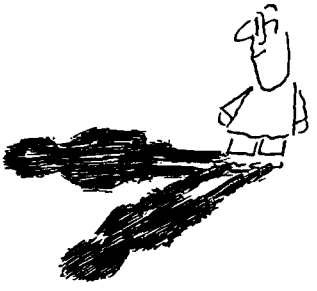
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

The Secret-Service Malaise



TOO OFTEN DISOWNED when things go wrong, too seldom listened to when policies are at the planning stage, the special services see-saw between extremes of audacity and caution. They tend to see the government-in-power as incompetent and inconsistent and its instructions as erratic and contradictory. This is particularly the case when the head of the intelligence services happens to be a strong personality, who conducts his own political analyses and may regard those of the government as either short-sighted or opportunistic.

Since 1975, the year when the CIA, America's secret service, came up, as it were, for public judgment and was taken to pieces in front of Congress, the legislature has continued to strengthen the instruments of control and increase the necessity for prior authorisation to be obtained for all covert activities. The two "Iran affairs", the American one and the French one, though very different, have stirred up the whole question of clandestine operations in the context of a democracy, the role of the secret services, and secrecy in general. Just how much subordination or autonomy, how much "transparency" or discretion are compatible with effective special services that are not paralysed, yet do not, in effect, supplant the democratic political authority?

The consequences of "*l'affaire* Greenpeace" in France and the hearings of the Congressional commission of inquiry in the United States have shown the extent to which, when an autopsy is carried out on an undercover operation that has become a scandal, the necessary and proper boundary between the responsibilities of political leaders and the improper initiatives of executive organs is often found to be imprecise. But is that boundary not in fact deliberately obscured at the moment of decision? Surely secret agents accept in advance, as a condition of the job, that they will be officially disowned if things go wrong and a flop makes the headlines? The chivalrous integrity of President John Kennedy in publicly admitting responsibility—and taking the blame—for the Cuban "Bay of Pigs" disaster has found few emulators.

According to "liberals" in the American sense (the progressive Left), it would almost appear that true democracy ought to rule out the very existence of secret services. Admittedly this puritanical attitude applies mainly to clandestine operations, the "active" services. "Liberals" are prepared to accept or tolerate pure intelligence in the shape of espionage and counter-espionage (particularly the second, as being strictly defensive) but not covert action. However, this distinction between a respectable—because passive—kind of intelligence and acts of intervention that are considered immoral, does not, in my view, stand up to examination. Intelligence is useful only if put to use.

When, in 1985, the CIA learned through its electronic listening devices in Egypt the flight number of the plane that the three terrorists who had been responsible for the *Achille Lauro* hijacking were about to take to Algiers, ought it to have confined itself to making a note of this valuable information? Or did it act correctly when it scrambled fighters to force the plane down on a NATO base in Sicily? If one condemns the second activity one must also renounce the first, for in that case it has lost its point and is not worth the money spent on it.

Can anyone imagine, on national territory, effective counter-intelligence that would never violate any of the laws protecting private life? When the French *DGSE* thought it had reason to believe that "Greenpeace" was an organisation manipulated by foreign powers hostile to France, should it have confined itself to recording the information or was it obliged to take action against the *Rainbow Warrior*? The blunder consists in having done so inside the territorial waters of a friendly country—or else in conducting nuclear tests in the South Pacific. And if that is what we feel, we should discontinue them.

There is no point in possessing good intelligence about the Afghan resistance unless you use it to decide whether or not to help that resistance. It is a childish illusion to imagine espionage and counter-espionage activities that would involve no operational consequences. It is all or nothing. The question, therefore, is still this: in the fight against other secret services, is the defence of democracy always compatible with respect for democracy?

TWO BOOKS that have been enjoying enormous success throughout the world for the past months have now also been published in France.[1] Both answer the question in the negative, though for diametrically opposite reasons. Bob Woodward's book on the CIA leans towards the view that a democracy ought to abolish all its special services completely. And what other conclusion could possibly have emerged from this lengthy tome, in which the author finds himself unable to name a single case in which (as he sees it) the CIA did not put itself in the wrong by taking action?

As a young journalist Bob Woodward made his name by

[1] *Veil: Secret Wars of the CIA*. By BOB WOODWARD. Simon & Schuster, $21.95, £14.95 (published in France by Stock). Peter Wright, *Spycatcher* (Heinemann, Australia, 1987; Robert Laffont).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

co-authoring (together with Carl Bernstein), the sensational *Washington Post* articles that between 1972 and 1974 unearthed bit by bit the illegalities of the Watergate affair. He has since become deputy editorial director of the same newspaper. However, in this book he falls far short of imposing on himself the same strict standards that his superiors imposed on him 15 years ago. (Small wonder that many of his "scoops" in the book were rejected by the *Post* as newspaper stories.) In particular, he no longer shows any respect for that iron law of investigation according to which sensitive information, if it is to be regarded as established, must stem from at least two different sources that have no knowledge of each other. In the United States he has been heavily criticised for this. Woodward purveys as proven truths unverifiable confidences that he alone received from William Casey, who headed the CIA from 1981 to 1986—and who is in no position to dissent or protest, having died in 1986.

Woodward also gives detailed reports of conversations at which he was not present. The passage that has been most heavily slated recounts revelations allegedly made to him from a hospital bed by the dying Casey at a time when, according to his doctors, Casey was no longer capable of articulate speech. Besides, even before aphasia set in, how could Casey, over so many years, have given so many explosive secrets to a journalist and a newspaper whom he knew to be fiercely opposed to his activities and to the policies of the President he served? Democracy may often seem a masochistic political system; but I find this ridiculous.

IN THE EVENT it is also unimportant—for the most interesting thing is the author's own political philosophy. The fact is, Woodward tells us nothing true that was not already public knowledge. His contribution is the "liberal" gloss, according to which crime makes its entrance here below in our vale of tears only when the CIA takes a hand. For instance, terrorists trained by Syria and Iran murder 241 American soldiers in Beirut with a lorry-load of TNT (later repeating the offence against the Embassy). The author sees the episode only as a kind of natural disaster. For him, the real monstrosity begins when the CIA tries to counter-attack on the spot, using undercover anti-terrorist commandos.

Woodward likewise ignores or plays down the flood of Soviet arms unloaded in Nicaragua for forwarding to the guerrillas in El Salvador, though the traffic is attested to by a mass of now declassified documentation. He can then more easily denounce the mining of Nicaraguan ports by the CIA —an operation that was, of course, utterly illegal under international law but no more so than Soviet support for the Salvadorian guerrillas.

This special perspective on things would be perfectly tenable if the Soviet Union and its satellites did not exist. And for all practical purposes Woodward does argue as if they do not exist, or at least as if they present no relevant danger. It follows that if the USSR and its allies are simply a phobia of the internal enemies of American democracy—which they then use to justify the CIA, the FBI, and the misdeeds of both—those services must be forthwith abolished in order to save the country's democratic institutions. From such a standpoint there is, to be sure, no need for a democracy to retain any special services. They are not truly necessary for the security of the country and may, on the contrary, contribute towards violations of freedom, law, and the open society.

PETER WRIGHT, the author of *Spycatcher*, likewise concludes that special services are virtually useless in a democracy; but he does so for the opposite reason, namely their almost complete impotence. In the long term at least, he says, they cannot win against the *KGB*. Not only does the latter—by definition—face no problems of legality; in these shadowy conflicts it has no difficulty in penetrating the services of the democratic countries while itself remaining almost impenetrable.

Unlike Bob Woodward, Peter Wright is an intelligence professional, and he knows what he is talking about from the inside. In 30 years he rose to the highest echelons of MI5 (the British equivalent of the French *DST* and the American FBI). During his long career he was given special responsibility for "unearthing moles", both in his own service and MI6 (the British equivalent of the French *DGSE* and the American CIA). In fact the most astonishing thing to emerge from this book is that the greater part of the work of Peter Wright and his colleagues consisted in tracking down the Soviet agents of British nationality within their own "intelligence community". One might be inclined to infer that to abolish those services would be to cut off the East's principal source of intelligence. . . .

The near-top figure in MI6, Kim Philby, was indeed a Soviet spy who escaped to the East in 1963. And Roger Hollis, the head of MI5, could also have been a Russian spy. (Peter Wright never succeeded in proving it, but that remains his conviction, based on a number of convergent clues, although Mrs Thatcher disowned the thesis in Parliament with a "Not Proven".) The whole book reveals a man who is extremely cautious in his hypotheses. The publisher's blurb exploits the legal battle waged by the Prime Minister and her Cabinet to try to have *Spycatcher* banned, and it makes much of an attempt by a number of MI5 agents to hand the press a file that would have compromised former Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson. It was those agents' superiors who prevented the leak and called their men to order.

But the most disconcerting thing is that Wright managed, in the course of his career, to identify and expose some 40 Soviet spies, who had succeeded not only in landing jobs with MI5 and MI6, but in making rather brilliant careers in those services. And there were even more than that, he says, whom he was unable to identify but of whose existence he knew from having intercepted Soviet messages in code.

Nor is that all. Philby, who was already under heavy suspicion ten years before his sudden departure for Moscow, was at the time subjected only to a purely formal vetting, and eventually received an official whitewash in the House of Commons from Prime Minister Anthony Eden. And the Soviet spy Anthony Blunt—later Sir Anthony—having been forced to confess in 1964, nevertheless retained his Artistic Adviser's position as Keeper of the Queen's pictures. Why?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fear of scandal? negligence? stupidity? the complicity of colleagues? In the United States it has similarly been established, according to Woodward, that the moles who sold the US Navy's entire secret transmissions code to the Soviets (and who were finally arrested between 1981 and 1987), had been or could have been identified long before, when there was still time to prevent the serious harm they caused.

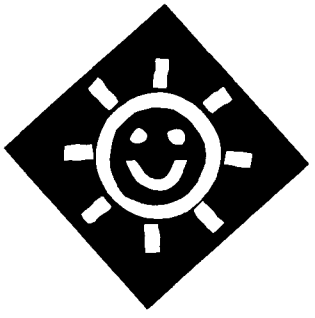
One's conception of the role of the secret services depends on one's view of foreign policy. Is their work not in fact part and parcel of the latter? If foreign policy has to be guided solely by domestic-policy considerations, it is no longer foreign policy. Granted, the law of democracy is that all policy must be determined in a spirit of respect for representative institutions and must have the backing of public opinion. The conflict between effectiveness and legality is, fortunately, not fatal; but it can exist. To recognise that democracy is structurally at a disadvantage here, compared with totalitarian régimes, is not to deny democracy; it is to be aware of the conditions that must be fulfilled if it is to be defended —and of their complexity.

It can also happen in a democracy that internal hatreds blind people to external dangers. Had the American administration respected to the letter the Clark amendment outlawing any "secret war" in Angola, and the Boland amendment prohibiting action over Nicaragua and hence over El Salvador and Guatemala, I surmise that all those countries would probably now lie entirely in Soviet hands. Congress would moan: "That wasn't what we wanted!" But in this case not wanting the means means willing the end. The secret war is not, alas, an option; it is a fact.

London Scene

The Girl in the Centre

By Roy Kerridge



In the High Street, near the clock tower, is a shop bought by the council and advertised in huge lettering as "Community Rights Information Centre". Busy shoppers pass it by without a glance, and few enquirers after Community Rights call there. The Information business appears to be in a bad way. However, the Centre seems to tick along merrily without any customers, for if anyone *does* pop in to discuss a problem, the place is thrown into a state of amazement.

"See if there's a leaflet on the subject in the rack there", the bespectacled Cockney-Asian girl at the desk suggests.

If leaflets do not satisfy the awkward customer, an appointment is made, and at last a meeting takes place with Jocelyn, the Girl at the Centre. Jocelyn lives upstairs in a mysterious administrative region, and all callers must be analysed by race before she can see them.

"There's a Black Afro-Caribbean to see you . . . and the lady I thought was White UK turns out to be White Irish . . ." the deputy announces loudly on the telephone, in the presence of the callers.

For four days of the week, Jocelyn gossips eagerly on the phone about who has got a pay rise or been promoted to Scale Six on the Community Relations pyramid. A kindly girl, she does her best to help her "clients" (as she calls them). It is not her fault if she has fallen into a sinecure, an artificial Council-made job for an educated Black Afro-Caribbean Woman (UK).

An imposing girl in her late twenties, Jocelyn wears flamboyantly "ethnic" clothes, brightly coloured "lappa"-style cloths, sandals, and long, plaited hair. Her statuesque Nilotic appearance suggests an Ethiopian or a Somali. In reality she was born in Walworth of a Nigerian father and an English mother. There is nothing Caribbean about her Afro-Caribbean self, but a great deal that is English. For this reason she often agonises with herself over the subject of race. Is she, or is she not, a member of "the Black Community"? Kedroy, the Rasta at the next Rights Centre four doors down, cruelly suggests that she is not a *true* Black, as she is not Jamaican. Such insinuations are very hurtful to Jocelyn, who is more sensitive than her commanding appearance suggests.

Sometimes Jocelyn tries to give the impression that she is a West Indian; but if her bluff is called, she freely admits she is a Nigerian. She talks a great deal about her father, a well-to-do businessman in Nigeria. He returned to his home town over twenty years ago, leaving his wife and children in London. In Nigeria, Jocelyn's father prospered mightily, and arranged for all his English children to go to private schools. He could, however, spare nothing for his English wife.

Jocelyn's earliest memories of her father take her back to a dark, gloomy flat where she and her four brothers and sisters are playing. Their mother has long departed for her cleaning job. As the children play, they stop and listen every few moments, like field-mice on the alert for an owl. Soon their father's heavy tread descends the stairs. At once all playing or squabbling ceases; each child leaps on to a kitchen chair and sits in silence with round, round eyes.

At last the great man enters and makes his way towards the stove. "Good morning, Daddy!" "Good morning, Daddy!" "Good morning, Daddy!" each child pipes up in turn. Sometimes Jocelyn or one of the others would be so overcome by the awesome horror of the occasion as to be struck mute. Then crack! down would come Daddy's knuckles on the head of the hapless child. Tears would quickly be stifled, and all eyes would fix upon the great man as he heated his breakfast and ate in ponderous silence.

Many West Africans are deeply rooted in village life and have not adjusted very well to living in city houses. In traditional West African villages, the head of the household lives in one hut within a compound, and his wives each live in their

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

own hut. Children run around playing, helping their mother and aunties and being looked after in turn. Visits to Daddy's hut are ceremonial affairs, with all parties on their best behaviour. There is no West African tradition of keeping a family under one roof. In the days before Mission Schools, a father would take his son to the yam fields and gravely explain to him the mysteries of peasant life.

Nowadays, in London or Lagos, a West African family may have to live in one *room*. Still, the father may only wish to see or hear his children when the mood takes him. Thunderous "discipline" may be imposed on the children as a result, with sudden arbitrary beatings for no particular reason. Children, particularly boys, can grow sly and secretive, qualities which may remain with them throughout life.

Certainly, many West Africans met with in London habitually introduce their wives as their sisters (or vice versa), claim to come from Ghana when they are Nigerians, mystify about their jobs, conceal their true addresses, and live under ever-changing pseudonyms. Their every action is hidden in a haze of needless deceit and confusion. The glittering over-decorated parlours of West Indian homes in London form a contrast to the gloom and shoddiness often to be found in the homes of West Africans, who are far more rich and worldly-wise than their Jamaican cousins. West Africans are a mysterious people.

Jocelyn and all the family had breathed a sigh of relief when the head of the household returned to Africa. Yet her father's oft-repeated words—"I must have *respect*! Your mother is an uneducated woman"—made a deep impression. Even now she scorns the mother who brought her up, and invokes her father's name with pride. At school everybody asked her, "Where are you from?"; and she always replied, in a proud upper-class tone, "Nigeria!"

Sometimes she would invent stories about the homeland she had never seen. At last, after university, she went to Nigeria and with some trepidation called on her father. He was overjoyed to see her! Fatted chickens were killed, and his new wife embraced her. Jocelyn was overwhelmed by all this kindness, the smiles, the happiness all around.

"Nigeria is your home!" her father beamed, as he paraded her before his friends, boasting of her attainments.

HER STAY was all too short, and the following year, after saving hard, she returned. "Oh, you!" her father said indifferently. "So what you want? You want to stay here? . . . Children, your European relative has arrived."

Jocelyn's novelty had worn off. She returned to London sooner than she had planned. Her white, debbie friends all waltzed into Publishing or Features-editing, but for an educated Black Afro-Caribbean, only the openly race-conscious "Community Relations Industry" welcomed with open arms. In the Council madhouse, her future depended on being Black, and her hard-working mother became an embarrassment. Let us hope Jocelyn soon gets that promotion she long has sought. The "Girl in the Centre" deserves all the happiness she can get.

During an Illness

Curtain cloth
blindfolds the house.
Hands of the clock
move forward
with feebler and feebler effort.
The chimes are wearying
at noon and midnight.

The pillow,
white for tranquillity,
has been warmed
by the sun that shines
too little or too much.

In the room
of the daytime sleeper
the struggle against sleep
waxes and wanes.
Flowers grieve
for their lost fragrance.
Bluebottles round
uneaten fruit
are giddy with impatience.

Gerard Smyth

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Special Book Section

Biography & Memoirs

The Epic Concluded

Martin Gilbert's "Churchill"—By ROBERT RHODES JAMES

MARTIN GILBERT must conclude his 20 years' devotion to completing the official biography of Sir Winston Churchill[1] with mixed Gibbonesque emotions of relief and regret. It has been a massive enterprise, originally started by Randolph Churchill, and to which Martin Gilbert has dedicated his energies since its inception in the early 1960s. We have eight huge Volumes, with their accompanying huge Companion Volumes. It has been meticulously and lavishly undertaken, and is a true monument to the greatest of modern men. For Gilbert's assiduity and attention to detail one can have nothing but praise and gratitude. It is a remarkable personal achievement.

Whether it is in truth biography is another matter, and here there is an interesting comparison to be made between his subject's two-volume biography of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill, and Lord Rosebery's brief monograph on the latter (both published in 1906). Rosebery's is a fraction of the length of Churchill's, and yet it tells us infinitely more about the man. In the first we have the speeches, the letters, and, incomparably described, "an authentic drama of the House of Commons"; in the latter, a portrait of superlative quality, description, and insight that makes Lord Randolph leap again into life—as schoolboy, undergraduate, scamp, friend, political *franc-tireur*, meteoric to rise and as swift to fall, and ultimately tragic. In Rosebery's words:

> "He will be pathetically memorable, too, for the dark cloud which gradually enveloped him, and in which he passed away. He was the chief mourner at his own protracted funeral, a public pageant of gloomy years. It is a black moment when the heralds proclaim the passing of the dead, and the great officers break their staves. But it is sadder still when it is the victim's own voice that announces his decadence, when it is the victim's own hands that break the staff in public."

Is there a more sublime passage in all English political biography, only matched by Morley's account of the death of Gladstone in his *Life of Gladstone* (1903) and Disraeli's of the fall of Peel in *Lord George Bentinck* (1852). Churchill himself was to scale the same heights in *Great Contemporaries* (1937), especially in his essays on Rosebery, Curzon, and Birkenhead—all, interestingly enough, far better and more vivid than the lengthy biographies he was reviewing. There is a lot to be said for the stern discipline imposed by the need for brevity, and Winston Churchill's greatest contributions to the art of biography were, in fact, the briefest.

The Randolph Churchill-Gilbert work began with several grievous disadvantages. The first was Randolph himself. Many have tried to depict his personality sympathetically, and indeed there was much to admire and even to love, but there was also another side, which so deeply darkened his relationship with his parents that their meetings became an anguish to all. Mary Soames, in her wonderful biography of her mother—which in fact is the story of her parents' marriage, and is a classic of sensitivity, objectivity, and clear-sighted love—sets out the sad story.[2] First Brendan Bracken, and then Christopher Soames, became the sons that Winston Churchill never had, and which fact Randolph bitterly resented. But filial veneration and paternal devotion, although sorely tried and strained, still held. Randolph considered that the task of writing his father's biography was, as he put it, "my birthright". The Churchill Trustees and others had grave doubts. Randolph could be, although by no means invariably, a brilliant instant journalist, but no one ever accused him of his father's appetite for hard work, intellectual capacity, or historical understanding. He treated his biography of Lord Derby as "a trial run". It certainly contained some interesting documents, but the reviewers who praised it—somewhat excessively, in some cases—did so in some wonderment that it had been done at all. It has not stood up very well to retrospective judgment.

In spite of their unhappy estrangement, Randolph remained utterly devoted to his father and all the causes he

[1] *Never Despair: Winston S. Churchill, Vol. VIII.* By MARTIN GILBERT. Heinemann, £30.00. The preceding seven volumes have all been published by Heinemann.

[2] Mary Soames, *Clementine Churchill* (Cassell, 1979; n.e. Penguin, 1981).

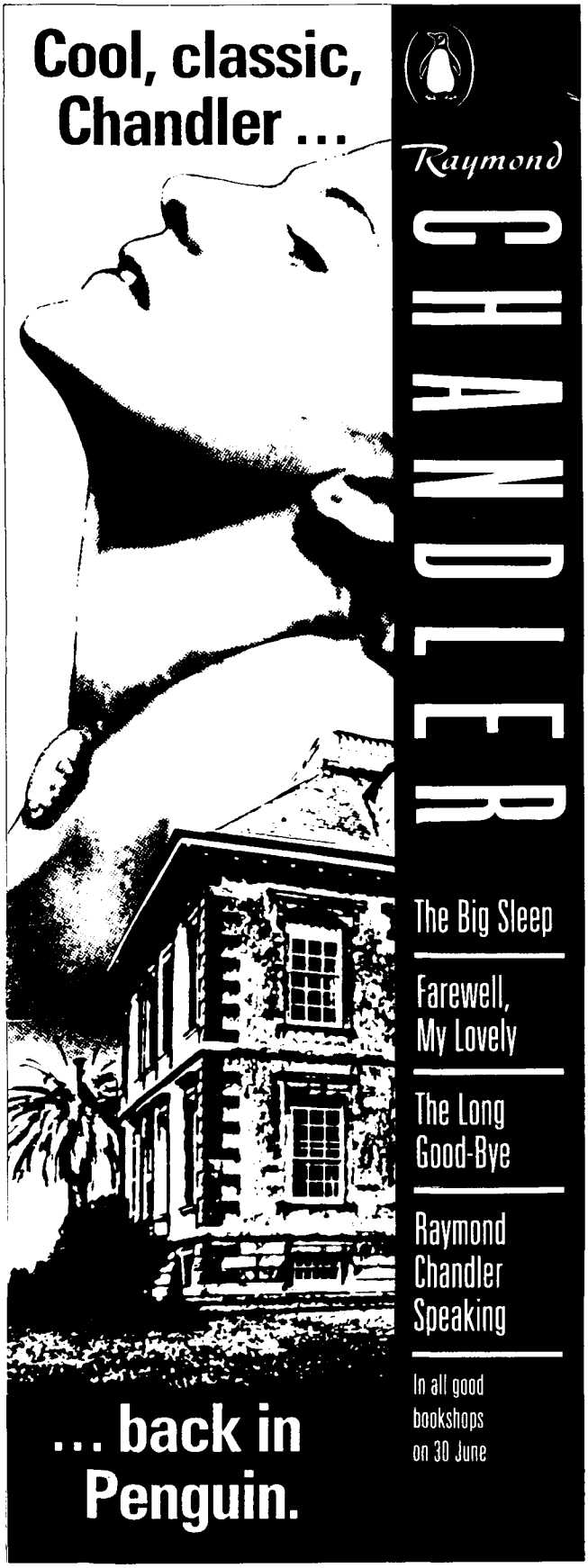
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

espoused in his turbulent and controversial career. It was clear from the outset that this was not going to be a critical and objective biography. Even worse, Randolph took as his theme the words of Lockhart upon Scott, "He shall be his own biographer".

The trouble with this was twofold. First, Lockhart had not followed this theme at all—at least, not *à outrance*, and I often wondered if Randolph had actually ever read his biography. It seemed intrinsically unlikely. But, second, the fact was that Winston Churchill had already been his own biographer, at very considerable length and in many volumes, from his childhood to the end of the Second World War. No public man in modern history has written more about himself or made so much money from doing so. Arthur Balfour's celebrated jibe about Churchill's First War volumes (written between 1923-29)—"Winston has written a book about himself and called it *The World Crisis*"—was uncomfortably close to the mark, and the same could be justifiably said about his Second War Memoirs (in six volumes, 1948-54). Both were, as Churchill robustly said, "the case for the defence". This was absolutely fair and justifiable, and in the case of *The World Crisis*, politically essential when his political star was in eclipse and he was being reviled for many things. But objective autobiography or history it certainly was not. As Gilbert reveals, he rewrote his Second War directives and memorandums, just as he rewrote many of Lord Randolph's letters (as I discovered when doing a new biography and saw Churchill's drafts). Purists may be shocked, but in the late 1940s Churchill was engaged in exactly the same task as he was in the 1920s—rejected by the electorate, he was putting his side of the story. There was self-criticism and admission of error, but this was never carried to excess. Nor should anyone have expected it to have been.

One small, but revealing, episode demonstrates this point. In his last volume Gilbert states that one person interviewed to assist Churchill in his Second War Memoirs was Alastair Buchan, adding in a footnote that he did not get the job. It is puzzling that he should have included this quite useless piece of information. What is even more puzzling is that the true story is omitted. What happened was that Alastair, recommended by Bill Deakin, was warmly approved of by Churchill, who at their interview expressed his pleasure at the prospect of their working together. As Alastair was walking to the door Churchill suddenly asked him, "Are you by any chance a relative of the late John Buchan?" Alastair replied that he was his youngest son. Churchill's benevolence abruptly vanished. "In that case", he remarked with much coldness, "I shall have no use for your services". Churchill was not going to have a son of a former critic and opponent in his entourage.

MY OWN CONTRIBUTION to the first Volume of the great work was indirect, but a crucial one. When I was undertaking my researches into Lord Randolph Churchill in 1957, the then Duke of Marlborough permitted me (for a fee) access to the so-called Muniment Room at Blenheim, which turned out to be a freezing annex to the



PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Agent's office. Here, in the general chaos, my wife and I discovered a black trunk marked "India Office". When released, it sprang open, with a mass of papers suddenly revealed. They were the private papers of Lord Randolph, his correspondence with his wife, and all the letters of his elder son. They also included his medical records. It had been sealed since the early 1900s. It was the core material for Randolph's first (1874-1900) volume, and especially for the vital period of Winston's childhood and youth up to Lord Randolph's death in 1895.

As this material was largely unpublished, and fascinating, Volume One virtually wrote itself. Randolph's "young men"—including Martin Gilbert—had been diligent elsewhere, and the result was widely hailed, and rightly so. It seemed that the theme of "He shall be his own biographer" had paid off triumphantly.

Volume Two, however, was a disaster. Randolph was increasingly unwell, and unsure of himself. There were more evident examples of bias, including the suppression of a paper about which Randolph had been enthusiastic. This allegedly proved that his father had foreseen the German menace from a very early stage: when it was pointed out that it in fact advocated much closer association with Germany, he lost interest in it. Several of his former "young men" had drifted away or become disillusioned, or, in my case (not unique) had had a flaming row and parted in dudgeon. The result was a disorganised volume, in which the laws of chronology had been thrown out, and much incomprehensible overlapping and even repetition. The reception was noticeably cooler. What would have happened to the great project had Randolph lived hardly bears thinking about. For one thing, most of the original huge advance had been spent, and the sponsors were becoming decidedly edgy. Randolph's lovely house at East Bergholt was sold for a sum that was, even by 1968 standards, quite ludicrously small. The obituarists shook their heads sadly over an unfortunate life. What also worried others was the future—if any—of The Life.

AT THIS CRITICAL MOMENT, in 1968, Martin Gilbert came to the rescue. It is no great secret that others were tentatively approached, and, with only one exception that I know of, recoiled, as did their agents when they looked hard at the realities and the prospects. The only exception was so ludicrously unsuitable that his eager application was barely considered. The Great Project was not only a sinking ship but, in the opinion of most, had already sunk.

What was needed, but did not happen, was a total re-evaluation of the Project.

As I had originally seen it, the whole purpose of the huge Companion Volumes, prepared and published at vast expense, was to include the full texts of documents that had been summarised or referred to in the main volumes. In fact, a large number were published in both, for what purpose it was impossible to comprehend. Then, the total lack of objectivity of Volume Two was only too evident, and the grave limitations of the "He shall be his own biographer" approach emphasised. What we were getting was another version of the case for the defence, and in the process the man himself, with his fire, brilliance, fun, erratic judgment, humanity, genius, and human fallibilities had gone, to be replaced by an all-wise automaton incapable of error, a giant among pygmies, tirelessly dedicated to the delivery of speeches, prescient memoranda, and much vision.

How, then, was he the most hated and distrusted of all his contemporaries? Why was it, when he fell sheer in 1915, that there was almost universal rejoicing? What was he actually *like*? Why was it that he often got things seriously wrong? To these vital questions we had only received "The Case For The Defence" that we had already read from Churchill himself, and with which others had begged to differ, and produced evidence to back their views. The Great Project had taken on a literally defensive air, with the Revisionists and Barbarians yelling outside the walls. It was not to be wondered at that the list of enthusiastic volunteers to carry on The Project was not considerable, either in number or in stature.

ALTHOUGH MARTIN GILBERT very much wanted to continue the work he had begun with Randolph, and was urged by many to do so, he had no illusions about the scale of his task, nor the weight of his responsibility; and it is immensely to his credit that he fully realised this, and was prepared to dedicate a very substantial part of his life and career to a venture in which he whole-heartedly believed. I know of at least one person who urged him most vehemently not to undertake it for his own interests, pointing out the immense commitment of time and energy, and opportunities foregone, that would inevitably be involved. As I knew something about the scale of this commitment, and had blenched at it, my respect and admiration for his taking it on is all the greater. If he had not, I am convinced that The Great Project would have foundered there and then, in the quagmire of the failure of Volume Two, and would have entered the annals of great literary disasters, to be savoured in later years by publishers, sponsors, serialisation-rights specialists, agents and historians, all of whom enjoy a spectacular fiasco provided that they are not involved in it.

The mistake was, as in the case of Julian Amery when he was asked to complete J. L. Garvin's deeply flawed biography of Joseph Chamberlain, that it was decided to keep to the original format, as though there was no better alternative, when in fact there were many. Forests would crumble so that six more vast volumes, with their huge Companion Volumes, would appear. *Everything* would be included, often mercilessly so. Most unhappily of all, it would still be "The Case For The Defence". The first example of this was the treatment of the Dardanelles Campaign, where there was, to put the matter mildly, very good cause to seriously challenge Churchill's own account in *The World Crisis* and his evidence to the Dardanelles Commission, but we had the complete Churchillian version once again. This set a pattern.

It would indeed be difficult, in reading Gilbert's six volumes, to appreciate that Winston Churchill was a deeply ambitious, egocentric, often abominably selfish, difficult, and ruthless man with very few friends and supporters, and whose judgment—as, for example, over the Russian Civil War,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ireland, de Gaulle, and India—could be so appallingly wrong. Nor was he always right over defence matters in the 1930s. It is a large part of the overwhelming attraction of the man that he *was* so often wrong, and had a capacity for recovery that was astounding. He shared with Caesar a capacity for getting himself into the most terrible disasters and an absolute genius for turning them to his advantage. The sheer fun of his company, so wonderfully described by, among others, the late Stewart Alsop, does not emerge at all. Everything—or almost everything—is catalogued meticulously, with endless and often quite unnecessary footnotes, yet one turns to others—especially Mary Soames's book—to realise that there really was blood in those veins.

But I understand very clearly, and very sympathetically, why Martin Gilbert venerated Churchill and was determined to serve him well. And so he has. I cannot think of any contemporary historian who could have done half as well, or would have been prepared to dedicate himself more devotedly to a great cause. For these and other merits he deserves unstinted praise and gratitude. Still, the great lesson is that when a family next decides on the biography of a great personage it should get its first choice right, and should learn from this example that when a large ship is pointed in the wrong direction it is very difficult indeed to induce it to change course—let alone to make it reverse.

POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY has many dangers, of which by far the greatest is for the biographer to put forward his views, theories, and judgments as facts. Gilbert is so acutely aware of this peril that he goes to the opposite extreme by hardly ever making objective judgments, contenting himself simply with putting forward the evidence. But by doing so he often leaves the reader puzzled and with no guidance or comment. The deep sadness of Churchill's last year in Office—indeed, ever since his 1953 stroke—never comes out, nor the fully justified concern of his colleagues, family and friends that his wonderful career would end in awful anti-climax. His obsession with Summits of the great, too often ill-prepared and ill-planned, in itself requires some analysis, throwing light on Churchill's personality, particularly in his declining years; it also marred his wartime leadership. His chaotic manner of running a Government or a Department could have had disastrous results, but what is interesting is that they did not; and here, although Gilbert gives full and warm praise to those who toiled to avoid the worst consequences of Churchill's style of leadership—which could be seen from the earliest part of his Ministerial career—an analysis of this phenomenon should have merited a significant diversion.

But diversions are not Gilbert's *forte*, and he never seems to stand back and survey the man himself. The inexorable demands of continuing the story with strict chronology always triumphs. Also, there have been some excellent and shrewd analyses of Churchill's writing and speaking styles, in which the element of sheer poetry is so important—indeed, fundamental—but very little of this emerges in Gilbert's pages. The result is that it is all *there*, but the definition of biography as "the portrait of a soul in his adventures through

FREUD

A Life for our Time

PETER GAY

'The scholarship in this magnificent biography is magisterial... Not since Carlyle has biography been conceived of as so heroic, as so festive an occasion.'
The Sunday Times

'...written with enormous vitality and insight; the language is colourful but precise, bringing to life a wealth of personal information with a novelist's eye for detail.'
T.L.S.

With 32 pages of b/w illus
Available now

£16.95

J M DENT & SONS

Subscribe – and be sure of each issue

ENCOUNTER

ONE YEAR
UK £18.00
USA/Canada $39.00 (air freight)
India £20 (air freight)
Elsewhere £19.00 (surface)
Air rate on request

Full-time students
UK £14.40. USA/Canada $31.20 (air freight). Elsewhere £15.20 (surface). Please state place and course of study.

Payment by sterling or dollar cheque, money order, National Giro (no. 501 1752), or quote American Express account number.

Order by coupon below or similar letter.

To: ENCOUNTER, 44 Great Windmill Street, London W1V 7PA, England
Please send me ENCOUNTER for one year starting

with the _____ issue.

I enclose _____ (payment)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____ ZIP(USA) _____

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life" is clearly not accepted. A Monument, however devotedly designed and erected, is not biography.

Obviously, as Martin Gilbert would acknowledge, this will not be the last word on the subject, as others will be as fascinated as he by this amazing man and his amazing life. They will have to address themselves to the mystery of his relationship with his children and—with the notable exception of Mary—the sadnesses of their lives (and Mary Soames has, with love, demonstrated what a complex person Lady Churchill was). But I hope that the next generation of studies will concentrate more on the man himself, and his errors as well as his triumphs.

In the meanwhile, one closes this immense work with gratitude to and admiration for the author, particularly as without him it would never have been completed at all. If reservations remain about whether this form of biography deserves to survive, and if it is very difficult to describe as literature, the fact is that it reflects Gilbert's own view of how history should be researched and written, and there are those—particularly in the United States—who wholeheartedly agree with him. I personally prefer more light and colour and a brutal suppression of material that is neither important nor relevant, so that what *is* important is given priority. One might also have expected, at the end of this great enterprise, a summing-up of this phenomenal man. But that must be for others to undertake, and they will have no complaint to make that they are deprived of material by this supremely honest and devoted biographer.

Black & White Portraits

People in Southern Africa—By COLIN STYLE

IN THE MAY 1986 issue of ENCOUNTER, I wrote that the reader in the 21st century could find much of anti-apartheid poetry grown "stale, monotonous and irrelevant". I suggested that the excesses of the system had bred "an obsessively repetitious literature". Hard words, but this overview of a clutch of books, mainly from or about South Africa, provides a chance to re-evaluate so pessimistic an analysis.

Having ploughed through them, I revise the charge of obsessive repetitiousness—at least in one respect. As I eyed them piled up on my desk, Wallace Stevens's axiom "the style of the poem is the poem itself" floated into my mind. The solid content of anecdotage and analysis of apartheid is treated in many different styles by this cavalcade of biographers, journalists and authors.

This is most marked with the biographies. At the top of the pile is an up-to-the-minute portrait of today's man, *Tutu: Voice of the Voiceless*.[1] (It is misleading, surely, to describe the protest from Soweto as "voiceless". It is powerful, menacing and unrelenting, with plenty of access to the international media.) The differences in style between Shirley du Boulay's biography of Tutu and James Hall's ghosting of *Makeba: My Story*,[2] for example, are based on the exigencies of portraying two diametrically different characters. Otherwise, the similarities between the histories of Bishop and actress are the necessary descriptions of the flak barrage of apartheid. Both Tutu and Makeba have been subjected to the same insults and humiliations, meted out with a fine lack of discrimination.

Stylistically, Shirley du Boulay is crisp, bright and varnished. She favours smooth, ingenious transitions in tense, in order to appear punctiliously objective and, at the same time, not negatively critical—"Tutu, it has to be said, was not good with money". Has he now overcome this forgivable weakness? Generally, though, her evaluations are careful and seasoned. The fatuous slips are found in the large generalities: "Bushman paintings, cannibal caves and fossil footprints of five-toed dinosaurs 180 million years old are reminders of old Africa, long before the white man."

As is inevitable with bright, positive, public relations biographies, there is a tendency to treat the most off-the-cuff remark with awe: "Lesotho is an Ulster in reverse." None the less, enough gets past the careful partiality to allow reasonable insight into Tutu's character. My feelings toward him, as is surely appropriate in an informative biography, waxed and waned. For example, it was admirable of Tutu to leave England, where he was very happy as an Associate Director of the Theological Education Fund, to return to the tough job of Dean of Johannesburg. On the other hand, was he not being volatile and irresponsible to throw up the Bishopric of Lesotho, after a few months, to go back to the big time in South Africa? Tutu is a communicator *par excellence*, with a quick, deft mind and a warm, compassionate spirit. His rapid, effortless rise in the Anglican hierarchy attests to his abilities. However, I have a sombre feeling that Archbishop Tutu's moment is now. More on this later.

Shirley du Boulay combines analysis with reportage. *Makeba: My Story*, on the other hand, is written in an existential rush, using short sentences in a perennial present

[1] *Tutu: Voice of the Voiceless*. By SHIRLEY DU BOULAY. Hodder & Stoughton, £12.95.

[2] *Makeba: My Story*. By MIRIAM MAKEBA with JAMES HALL. Bloomsbury, £13.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tense. The name-dropping is very marked, and understandably so. It is no small feat for a black South African singer, the daughter of poor parents, to toil up the ladder of international fame with no aid but her own talent and energy. And there can be nothing but admiration for her resilience—surviving unsuccessful marriages, the early death of her only daughter, and near-fatal cancer. Never were her qualities better illustrated than when her South African passport was brutally withdrawn by the South African authorities while, at the same time, she was dropped by Harry Belafonte from his touring show. She picked herself up and made a new career from a base in Guinea. It is one fault of this vivacious, kaleidoscopic narrative, that it doesn't pause to discuss not unimportant details. For example, *did* she condemn Israel's attack on Egypt as aggression against an "African country"? This report, which led to the falling-out with Belafonte, is left unclarified.

AN OLIVE SCHREINER READER[3] covers another woman of another age. With extracts of her essays and stories, a feminist introduction backed by a beautifully written afterword by Nadine Gordimer, notes and a biographical survey, it is an extremely handy and interesting reference book about a prophetic liberal and feminist. I must draw attention to a detail of gossip. What is the evidence for the passing assertion, made in the *Reader*, that Olive Schreiner tried to seduce Cecil John Rhodes? So bizarre an idea deserves a chapter of discussion on its own!

The *Reader* focuses on Schreiner's minor, but still seminal pieces, and omits her sole masterpiece, *Story of an African Farm*—which Rhodes considered so marvellous a book that he carried a copy constantly. This may be no great recommendation in 1988; but, at least, it attests to the eclectic appeal of a classic which still haunts the collective mind of South African writers.

A Land Apart: A South African Reader,[4] a collection of poems and stories by miscellaneous writers, exhibits many Schreiner characteristics: sombre, arid landscaping, brutality, groping towards a desperate mysticism, frustrated liberalism and existential narratives of slavery. Schreiner particularly impregnates the Afrikaner writers, whose literature, of all the races, is closest to the land, and yet is the most disaffected and alienated. It is a moot point whether conscious imitation is involved or whether the South African landscape and situation compel a similar presentation—and Olive Schreiner just happened to be first. The modern writers seem to be escalating brutal writing to the level of insane nightmare. Sheila Roberts, for example, has never been one to eschew toughness, but her contribution, a little cameo on mass rape, is utterly shocking and dreadful in its detail.

It is a relief to turn to *Lifetimes: Under Apartheid*,[5] a restrained collection of photographs interleaved with excerpts from Nadine Gordimer's works from the 1950s onwards. David Goldblatt's pictures are spare and searing. His perception of South Africa is static and mummified. Broken-down farms and preternaturally aged townships form a backdrop for South Africans of all races, emptily smiling or staring apathetically into space. It is curious how Nadine Gordimer puts down layer upon layer of granulated detail in her incomparable portraits of South African life, whilst Goldblatt peels off layer upon layer. Yet the two go together. Nadine Gordimer's provision of sustained detail—so often the hallmark of a major writer—and her magnified powers of social observation separate her from the general run of apartheid writers.

Christopher Hope is a writer trying to swim clear of the apartheid melée and individualise himself, and he has achieved something of an international reputation. In *White Boy Running*,[6] he foresakes those grotesque serio-comic novels that seem to owe a lot to Tom Sharpe, and returns on a non-fiction tour of South Africa. (He is now resident in England.) As the blurb notes, it was "a journey to take him back into his own past and right into the heart of the present". Like all of Christopher Hope's books, it is well-written and entertaining.

But Hope illustrates one debatable aspect of apartheid

[3] *An Olive Schreiner Reader: Writings on Women and South Africa*. Edited by CAROL BARASH with an Afterword by NADINE GORDIMER. Pandora, £12.95.

[4] *A Land Apart: A South African Reader*. Edited by ANDRÉ BRINK and J. M. COETZEE. Faber & Faber, £9.50, paper £4.95.

[5] *Lifetimes: Under Apartheid*. By NADINE GORDIMER with photographs by DAVID GOLDBLATT. Jonathan Cape, £15.00.

[6] *White Boy Running*. By CHRISTOPHER HOPE. Secker & Warburg, £10.95.

THE ECONOMISTS' BOOK·SHOP
Specialists in the Social Sciences
CLARE MARKET, PORTUGAL STREET
LONDON WC2A 2AB
Telephone: 01-405 5531
Open 9.30 — 6.00 Mondays to Fridays
10.00 — 1.30 Saturdays

We stock books on
ECONOMICS • POLITICS • HISTORY • INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS • SOCIOLOGY • DEVELOPMENT STUDIES • LAW • PHILOSOPHY

Plus a wide selection of paperbacks, magazines and pamphlets.

We buy books too!
Our secondhand department is always interested in buying books in the above subject areas. Ring **01-405 8643** for an appointment.

Ask for the 'Social Science Selection Guide' — our latest listing of new titles.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

writing abroad: that of playing down the desire for a bigger stage. He explains that he renounced South Africa and left because of apartheid (naturally), and because he felt crushed by his position as a liberal white. He outlines the genesis of these feelings as a Catholic English boy surrounded by Calvinist Afrikaners in Pretoria. It all sounds rather like another South African writer, William Plomer, who, a generation or more ago, also sought his literary fortunes abroad. Plomer once explained that he could not go back to South Africa because it induced a "psychic terror". This underplayed the very potent factor of personal ambition, the desire to leave and make it in the "big time". What adds to my feelings of ambivalence about the personal testament in *White Boy Running* is the love/hate relationship towards the Afrikaner that it reveals. The anti-hero of Christopher Hope's tour is Eugene Terreblanche of the neo-Nazi ARM. Hope is fascinated by fascist evil and, in fact, Nazi Germany is introduced in all his novels. I am even rather surprised he has managed to tear himself away.

RICHARD MANNING, IN *They Cannot Kill Us All*,[7] also takes an eye-witness tour through 1986 South Africa. An American correspondent, expelled by Pretoria, he is far from equal to Christopher Hope. I respect the informative value of his experiences—his descriptions of Soweto are particularly vivid and graphic. However, contrary to laudatory American reviews on the back of the jacket, I found his account frequently silly and pretentious: "Africa is a mysterious circle made up of intersecting lines. In Africa nothing ever simply exists on its own; something is always part of another story." Where was it I put my revolver? Manning is also overfond of lofty, smug pontifications: "When is the Afrikaner going to see the reality of his situation?"

I was working in South Africa in 1976 when Smith announced the capitulation to majority rule in Rhodesia. An Afrikaner in the office remarked, "Our turn next". They see the reality all right.

The whole style of reportage, in fact, is conducted with an irritating finger-clicking trendiness. Whenever Manning's soul is in agony he screams "shit" or "fuck". (No place to hide from "shit" these days.) The style undermines the authenticity of a correspondent who, after all, *did* take the trouble to meet and study a broad cross-section of South Africans.

As to be expected, Anthony Sampson's *Black and Gold: Tycoons, Revolutionaries and Apartheid* is highly professional:[8] nothing absolutely new, but a sharp, gripping book none the less. *South Africa Inc: The Oppenheimer Empire*[9] adds to the fruit-salad of subtitles—and by a team, this time: David Pallister, Sarah Stewart and Ian Lepper. It is a fascinating account tinged with a spot of white class warfare: "a patronising élitism was disguised with conviviality" (on the British upper class). The hypocrisy behind the mask of Oppenheimer liberalism, and international skullduggery and ruthless exploitation of black miners are shown to have a long history. The authors have an impressive array of facts and figures to back their allegations. As in most exposés, one has to take on trust what they say: after all, *they* have done all the research. I am surprised the Anglo-American Corporation has avoided public scrutiny for so long—which goes to show how smart Harry Oppenheimer is.

Brian Lapping's *Apartheid: A History*[10] is television's contribution to the raft of titles. Written to accompany the Granada series, it has the better qualities of the TV documentary: it is lucid without sacrificing accuracy, as well as dispassionate, gripping and dignified. The effect of the mass media has not been all bad.

"Apartheid" is a wonderful word. It is pithy and enormously suggestive. It has never staled with custom. It is also misleading as a complete interpretative definition for the struggle in South Africa. The injustices and cruelties of "separateness" are very real. However, even if the social apparatus of apartheid did not exist, there would still be the power struggle for majority rule.

FOR LIFE AFTER APARTHEID, I have only two witnesses. Both deal with post-Independence African countries: *Zanzibar to Timbuktu*[11] and *In My Father's Country: A Nigerian Journey*.[12] Dr Daniels's amusing, light and readable account cannot conceal his dark diagnosis that Africa, from Zanzibar to Timbuktu, is in a state of chaotic collapse. Sharing his misgivings, I could not but notice how, after panning African capacity for self-rule, he airily ends: "For Africans, I discovered, have a unique talent for finding happiness when others would find only misery." Lucky, lucky Africans.

Adewale Maja-Pearce writes an altogether sadder book. Half English and half Nigerian, he views Nigeria with baffled horror. It haunts him like a dog with cans tied to its tail. *His* ending is grimly matter-of-fact: "An hour later we touched down in London. Efficiency was the order of the day. The officials were polite and everything worked." Nothing vaguely and spiritually upbeat. Just thanking God he has returned to a country where the toilets flush.

Nigeria is an indirect example of what South Africa could be like if majority rule goes wrong; but neither of these books forecasts the future except in passing. The present battle with apartheid totally absorbs talents and energies. However, Rhodesia is a fair blueprint of what may well happen—a white swing to the right, a lull as the lid is screwed back on, a furious war followed by handover to black majority rule, and a large white exodus, including that of Afrikaners.

Since power cannot easily be shared or divided, I do not personally believe that Archbishop Tutu's vision of a South Africa in amity shared by all its races is really fulfillable. But then the Archbishop does not emerge from his biography as a

---

[7] *They Cannot Kill Us All: An Eyewitness Account of South Africa Today*. By RICHARD MANNING. I. B. Tauris, £12.95.

[8] *Black and Gold: Tycoons, Revolutionaries and Apartheid*. By ANTHONY SAMPSON. Hodder & Stoughton, £12.95.

[9] *South Africa Inc.: The Oppenheimer Empire*. By DAVID PALLISTER, SARAH STEWART and IAN LEPPER. Simon & Schuster, £12.95.

[10] *Apartheid: A History*. By BRIAN LAPPING. Grafton Books, £12.95.

[11] *Zanzibar to Timbuktu*. By ANTHONY DANIELS. John Murray, £13.95.

[12] *In My Father's Country: A Nigerian Journey*. By ADEWALE MAJA-PEARCE. Heinemann, £11.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Literary Review

The Literary Review, edited by Auberon Waugh and Laura Cumming has tripled its circulation in twelve months but is still almost unprocurable in many areas except by subscription. A year's subscription costs only £15 and secures twelve 64 page issues, printed on good glossy paper, packed with reviews, competitions, book gossip, witty and informed articles, pictures, cartoons, poetry and occasional short stories. It is now essential reading for all who wish to keep up with what is happening in the world of letters – especially for those with insufficient time to read everything.

I wish to subscribe to the Literary Review and enclose a cheque/ postal order for £15.00 (UK)/£20.00 (Europe)/£35.00 (Airmail outside Europe)

Please debit my Access/VISA/American Express card number

Signature _____ **Date card expires** _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____ **Post Code** _____

LITERARY REVIEW 51 BEAK STREET LONDON W1R 3LF

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

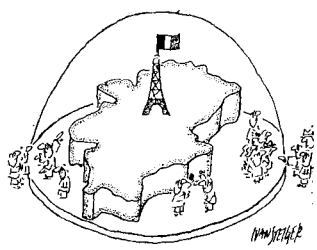
political animal. He is too warm-hearted, gentle, and volatile. Nor is he an economic animal. "As far as Africans are concerned, money is a commodity to be used: it should be circulated, not hoarded", he remarked. Like the myth of intrinsically "happier" Africans, this is fine as an expression of non-materialism: but it is precisely this sort of thinking that has plunged countries like Nigeria into deep trouble.

BY A NUMBER of such statements, the Archbishop shows that he has not thought his position through and imagined a post-Independence situation. He represents the last bastion of old-style resistance to apartheid—concentrating on the dispensing of social and economic justice before the demand of transfer to majority rule. As a multiracial liberal, he represents the same phase as the poet Oswald Mtshali who (as I wrote in ENCOUNTER) "has been rejected by black poets and intellectuals" because "he conforms to the *passé* white liberal mode of satirising the humiliations and institutions of apartheid at a time when black radical opinion is eyeing the reins of power". Shirley du Boulay concentrates on defending Tutu because he sent his children overseas to be educated. But this is quite consonant with his multiracial approach and world view. Tutu is not an Azanian nationalist.

Does this make him another Muzorewa? He could be, if he pursues political leadership. He should remain as he is, a marvellous preacher and mediating spokesman for Christian values. South Africa is going to need him very badly in the coming years. In spite of the violent antipathy of a section of white South African opinion, he is really no extremist. The destiny of South Africa, in fact, is being forged by stony-faced comrades in camps.

Mitterrand's Extended Itinerary

Europe & the Fifth Republic—By MICHAEL SUTTON



THE YEAR of 1958 was of double importance for France: its beginning saw the entry into force of the Treaty of Rome, its end the inauguration of the Fifth Republic. Now, in the summer of 1988, with François Mitterrand at the start of a second term of office at the Elysée, it has become apparent that the *leitmotif* is to be a restrengthened commitment to this twofold heritage of 30 years. Thus, his self-assumed task will be to strive for a full reconciliation, symbolically speaking, of all he deems worthy to last in the visions of a Robert Schuman and a Charles de Gaulle. Socialism is not to be renounced but the accent will be elsewhere.

Already, under the Fourth Republic, the reach of François Mitterrand's ambition was high, and already he cut an enigmatic political figure. "I have known Mitterrand for twenty years", wrote François Mauriac in 1954; "he is a very intelligent young man as well as very ambitious, with no doubt in his mind that he is destined to be prime minister; but he is also very patriotic." The occasion of this supportive remark was the so-called *affaire des fuites* when, in an apparent attempt to compromise the Mendès-France government, suspicions were maliciously stirred up in opposition circles to cast grave doubts upon the public rectitude of the youthful Mitterrand, then Minister of the Interior.

More than three decades later the political ambitions of Mauriac's fellow-Gascon have been more than amply realised, at least if measured by the substance of power attained. Yet the enigma, which rendered Mitterrand vulnerable in the 1954 incident to what were suspicions of treasonable complicity with the French Communist Party, has long persisted. After nearly half a century of public life, including the past seven years at the Elysée, there is still an air of mystery about his political convictions and, perhaps even more, their metaphysical underpinning.

It is therefore scarcely surprising that the run-up to the 1988 presidential elections witnessed further attempts to either pierce or dismiss the mystery in question. Two books in particular are worthy of note: Jean Daniel's *Les Religions d'un président: regards sur les aventures du mitterrandisme*[1] and Catherine Nay's *Les sept Mitterrand: ou les métamorphoses d'un septennat.*[2] These journalists' offerings are complemented by a third, Robert Mitterrand's *Frère de quelqu'un*, the autobiography of François's elder brother.[3]

IF ONLY BECAUSE of her previous and justifiably successful *Le Noir et le Rouge: ou l'histoire d'une ambition*, a straightforward biography which is richest in its account of Mitterrand's formative years and early political career, attention may first be given to Catherine Nay's new endeavour to chart the significance of a presidency. *Les sept*

[1] *Les Religions d'un président: regards sur les aventures du mitterrandisme.* By JEAN DANIEL. Bernard Grasset, FF110.

[2] *Les sept Mitterrand: ou les métamorphoses d'un septennat.* By CATHERINE NAY. Bernard Grasset, FF96.

[3] *Frère de quelqu'un.* By ROBERT MITTERRAND. Robert Laffont, FF100.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mitterrand must be judged a disappointment if the criterion is the discovery of any deep or profound design. Her earlier quest for the grail of the true Mitterrand gives way in this essay to the resigned and cynical view that there is no elevated purpose. With delectation, she cites the reported confidence of the President of the Republic to a parliamentary deputy, a Rocardian and *ipso facto* high-minded: "You believe that politics is a confrontation of ideas. You are making a mistake, young man, it is a *métier*."

The consistency of Mitterrand is at best the opportunism of the Radical tradition of the Third Republic.[4] Hence the seven personae of the French President in seven years of office, as represented by the glib title of Nay's essentially facetious work: the first assumed persona is that of Léon Blum (for 1981-82, the blissful opening period); this is soon replaced by that of Blum's own more accommodating successor, Camille Chautemps (1982-83); followed by an about-turn from socialist economics to a certain economic liberalism, and so the mask adopted is none other than that of Ronald Reagan (1983-86); the two years of *cohabitation* see Mitterrand ascend in quick succession from arbiter to *père de la nation* (reminiscent of Pétain) to imperial majesty; while throughout the seven years there is the frequently assumed persona of the Fifth Republic's founder, de Gaulle himself. The contrived or trivial nature of some of these associations is partly redeemed by Nay's undoubted brilliance as a chronicler and raconteuse. Her occasional sketches of Pierre Mauroy, Jacques Delors and Laurent Fabius are especially vivid, and she does provide a good deal of anecdotal evidence showing Mitterrand's unsureness of touch or lack of sound intuition in the sphere of economic policy.

Les Religions d'un président is a denser and much more serious essay. For Jean Daniel, who takes issue with the historian Jean-Pierre Rioux of the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent, Mitterrand can in no way be confined to the Radical tradition. It is indeed, he argues, profoundly misleading to place his roots essentially there:

> "In the case of François Mitterrand, I readily admit that he has brought to socialism a perfume of a Republican kind, one that is very 'Fourth Republic'. But this is neither new nor interesting. What is so and constitutes his most original contribution is clearly the synthesis he realises, first of all within his own person, between a tradition of Christian origin and a socialist tradition."

There have thus been figures of inspiration from both traditions giving a consistency to Mitterrand's thought and convictions. The Socialist ones are above all Jaurès and Blum, and to their legacy or influence the founder of *Le Nouvel Observateur* devotes several percipient pages. On the Christian side, his ascription of inspiration is more impressionistic. From a biographical point of view, he attaches importance to the years passed by Mitterrand (1934-38) at the university residence in the Rue de Vaugirard run by the Marist Fathers (an establishment whose ambience has been described by Catherine Nay in *Le Noir et le Rouge*, and also by Jean Lacouture in his magistral biography, *François Mauriac*). From the standpoint of influences of schools of thought—whether direct or mediated—Daniel pertinently draws attention to the mid-19th-century figures of Lamennais, Lacordaire, Montalembert and Ozanam who, in their different but related ways, sought the forward looking reconciliation of the Catholic Church with the modern world.

Lastly, he points to two notable affinities, one in the shape of the kindred spirit of the Péguy of *Notre jeunesse* and the other—an almost provocative suggestion—in the form of shared social sympathies or instincts, transmitted through not too dissimilar family backgrounds and upbringings, with Charles de Gaulle. In partial explanation of the aversion of both Mitterrand and de Gaulle to what might be loosely termed "financial capitalism" or perhaps more simply "money", their common concern (however differently expressed) for the working class, and their joint predilection for an elusive *troisième voie*, Daniel rightly stresses the powerful influence of the tradition of so-called *catholicisme social* within the French Catholic world in the early decades of the 20th century.

All this may seem somewhat recondite, part of the *rétro* décor of the long-dead Third Republic. But Jean Daniel, in remembering it, has his eyes essentially fixed on the present. He relates it, in the case of Mitterrand, to what he terms the "re-establishment of Judaeo-Christian continuity in the official Catholic Church",[5] notably after the Second Vatican Council, largely as a result of Christian shame and a new

[4] A view shared by Franz-Olivier Giesbert, of *Le Nouvel Observateur*, who has lumped Mitterrand and Chirac together as erstwhile favourites of Henri Queuille, the pre-War Radical minister of agriculture and then Prime Minister under the Fourth Republic in 1948-49. See Giesbert's *Jacques Chirac* (Editions du Seuil, 1987). This book, incidentally, underlines what appears as Chirac's constant opportunism, though this does not preclude sympathy on the author's part for the former Prime Minister.

[5] See the interview in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 1 April, 1983. Reproduced in Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, *Osez croire, osez vivre: articles, conférences, sermons, interviews, 1981-1984* (Editions Gallimard, 1986). See, also, Jean-Marie Lustiger, *Le Choix de Dieu: entretiens avec Jean-Louis Missika et Dominique Wolton* (Editions de Fallois, 1987). A similar dialogue, often covering the same sort of questions, was conducted by Missika and Wolton with Raymond Aron at the beginning of the 1980s. See Raymond Aron, *Le Spectateur engagé: entretiens avec Jean-Louis Missika et Dominique Wolton* (Julliard, 1981).

RESEARCH CONSULTANTS
Leading academics
RESEARCH ASSISTANTS
Experienced honours graduates
TRANSLATORS
Qualified, most European languages
ARCHIVISTS
Editing and indexing by word processor

Research Assistance Routledge Associates
4 Lauriston Road, London SW19 4TQ
Phone 01-947 9375

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

awareness in the face of the Holocaust. A symbol in France of this recovered continuity is the presence of Cardinal Lustiger as Archbishop of Paris (a figure of fascination to Daniel, especially on account of the freshness of Lustiger's eschatology and his understanding of the destiny of Israel[5].

In addition to this new accent of universal dimension, there has been the full reconciliation of the Catholic Church in France with the Republic, also partly an effect of the horrors of Nazism—"the second French Revolution", Daniel calls it in an excess of hyperbole. Under these changed circumstances, he says, it is Mitterrand who represents his country supremely well in reinterpreting the political meaning of its complex Christian heritage. The French President is thus especially sensitive, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, to the profound right of the state of Israel to exist. Yet this awareness of France's "new Judaeo-Christian dimension", as ascribed by Daniel to Mitterrand, heightens almost paradoxically the obligation to find a fruitful *modus vivendi*, both at home and abroad, with the world of Islam, the third great religion of common descent from Abraham. It is a challenge posed by France's own large Maghrebian population (1.4 million residents of Maghrebian nationality, never mind origin, at the time of the 1982 census), as well as by France's long-standing and close links with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and also with the Lebanon.

THE TENSION between responding to this challenge and, on the other hand, loyalty to Israel must entail necessarily, Daniel implies, a measured approach to the problems of the Middle East; foreign to Mitterrand's mind is the impulsive pro-Arabism of a Jacques Chirac or a Claude Cheysson. Coupled with the singular failure of France to carry any weight in easing the conflicts in the Middle East during the past seven years, the same tension has also encouraged Mitterrand in his increasingly insistent view that the European Community must assert itself as a veritable actor on the international political stage. Only thus will France's voice be heard. Indeed this logic is a major theme of Daniel's essay.

Descending from the realm of meta-politics, Jean Daniel does point to the concrete achievements of Mitterrand's 1981-88 presidency. Pride of place must go to the Machiavellian eviction of the French Communist Party from the centre stage of French politics, thereby rendering viable the democratic alternation of power under the Fifth Republic. Vital, too, was the support given by the French President to Chancellor Kohl in January 1983, at a time of vacillation in the Western alliance, through the former's speech to the *Bundestag* in favour of the installation of Pershing 2 missiles. Finally, if there is virtue in humility and common sense, there was also the squarely faced recognition in March of the same year, that the necessary revision of domestic economic policy had to be of a radical and permanent kind.

Robert Mitterrand's *Frère de quelqu'un* is a work of family piety. It is instructive for all that. It corroborates the portrayal of Mitterrand's childhood and youth in *Le Noir et le Rouge*. It certainly reinforces Jean Daniel's point about the importance of a "tradition of Christian origin". And there are occasional striking lines: for instance, about François Mitterrand's great interest from the outset in the initiatives of Robert Schuman and Jean Monnet[6]; and, earlier, about his first meeting with de Gaulle in Algiers in December 1943 (a meeting, says Robert Mitterrand, whose significance has been overplayed in explaining the subsequent souring of relations between his brother and the General).

Whatever the enigma of the complicated François Mitterrand, he has now returned to the Elysée for a second term of office. If he enjoys a further seven years or even five at the Elysée, he will have been the longest serving head of state under the Fifth Republic, the régime he initially damned. Moreover, he now aspires to popularity or support of a broad Gaullist kind. This aspiration was manifest during the period of the presidential elections in his search for non-Socialist support from the "social democrats" represented in the National Assembly by either the *CDS* (the centrist party, which is effectively the successor of the *MRP*, the large Christian Democrat party under the Fourth Republic) or else certain other deputies belonging to the *UDF* federation, with no party affiliation but of centrist leanings. Another way, of course, of looking at the preferences embodied in this overture is to simply note that, in what should be the final and crowning stage of Mitterrand's career, it seems to bring him back *mutatis mutandis* to much the same sort of centrist position he held in the Palais Bourbon from 1946 to 1958, in three successive legislatures of the Fourth Republic, by virtue of his membership of the small *UDSR* party.

WHAT IMPRINT DOES François Mitterrand wish to leave now? Between declaring his candidature on 22 March and his election on 8 May 1988, François Mitterrand aired his views at length and on a wide range of matters. Two quite different texts merit attention: his interview with Olivier Duhamel, entitled "*Sur les institutions*", published in the review *Pouvoirs*,[7] and his remarkable *Lettre à tous les Français*—intended as a monumental epistle rather than a vulgar electoral campaign message—which was published in French newspapers at the end of the first week of April.[8]

The most striking remarks in the interview with Duhamel relate to Mitterrand's view—after five years of undisputed power and two years of *cohabitation*—of the office of President itself. The role of the head of state, he said, should be neither that of a nonentity ("*président-soliveau*") on the model of the Fourth Republic, nor that of an omnipresent ruler ("*président commande-tout*") on the original Gaullist model. The proper role should be rather "to establish the path for the nation in those areas where what is at stake is its security, its place in the world, its liberties and its continuity."

[5] A point that has been stressed by François Mitterrand himself. See, for instance, his *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France: introduction à vingt-cinq discours, 1981-1985* (Fayard, 1986).

[7] François Mitterrand, "*Sur les institutions*", in *Pouvoirs: revue française d'études constitutionnelles et politiques* (Presses Universitaires de France, no. 45, 1988).

[8] See *Le Monde*, 8 and 9 April 1988.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But, as experience has proved, the problem is that there is a certain ambiguity about the respective functions of President and Prime Minister as laid down under articles 5 and 20 of the Constitution: "The Republic", he argued, "would have much to gain from a clearer division of tasks and more precise demarcation of boundaries within the executive power."

Another subject touched upon in this interview was that of the relation between government ministers and political parties. An acerbic remark was made about Chirac remaining as head of the *RPR* while serving as Prime Minister (a return to "the worst habits of the Fourth Republic") and having consequently allowed the heads of the other parties in the parliamentary majority coalition also to hold simultaneous ministerial responsibility. Such a practice, ruled Mitterrand, must not be repeated. He raised the possibility of a reduction in the term of the presidential mandate from seven to five years, even if it was not something that he would personally press for. He also called for a more responsible parliament. In contrast to the practice of the outgoing Chirac government, there should be little recourse in the future to legislation by ordinance and to the guillotining of parliamentary debate, and parliament should attend to its own image with, for example, less flagrant absenteeism and more question time. But, true to much of the spirit of the Fifth Republic, Mitterrand also suggested a wider use of the referendum, with a power of initiative accorded to the electorate at large.

In its consideration of constitutional issues, the *Lettre à tous les Français* covered much of the same ground. However, one change of position during the few weeks between the finalisation of the two texts may be remarked upon. In the *Pouvoirs* interview, Mitterrand appeared to call for a minor revision of the Constitution ("a few slight adjustments" were the words he used) in respect of articles 5 and 20, which define the respective powers of President and Prime Minister. But in the subsequent *Lettre*, such constitutional revision was explicitly ruled out. His treatment of problems relating to taxation and the social security system had—not surprisingly—a resolute Socialist tone. Yet, more generally, his approach to economic and social policy testifies to the fact that, in contrast with 1981, there is now a large consensus across a broad political spectrum—excluding the Communists and the National Front—that a certain pragmatism must take precedence over political dogma.

Where the *Lettre à tous les Français* showed the most vigour was, first, in its demonstration that its author had succeeded in exercising his proper prerogatives in the spheres of foreign policy and defence during the two difficult years of *cohabitation* and, secondly, in its lofty plea for a stronger Europe. As regards the latter, Mitterrand insisted on the crucial need to infuse a new vitality into the European Community through the implementation of the "completing the internal market" programme, with its end-1992 deadline, in the framework of the Single European Act. He also called for a new effort in the realm of defence ("everything indicates that the common defence of Europe will soon take the centre of the stage"). The model, of course, is present Franco-German military cooperation. Transposing the rallying cry of Charles Albert of Piedmont in the revolutionary year of 1848, Mitterrand grandiloquently concluded that "*l'Europe se fera par elle-même—ou jamais*".

François Mitterrand has in the past proved himself an international statesman of considerable stature, as witness his measured realism in the face of Soviet power and his support of Spain's entry into the European Community, an indispensable step if the rhetoric of European integration was to be shown as other than pious nonsense. However, if he is to realise his now enunciated aims to consolidate the institutions of the Fifth Republic and, at continental level, to strengthen the role of the European Community, he cannot disregard the truth that there is many a hard practical decision ahead. At home, economic and social questions may no longer be the subject of high political passion; but it is clear that a major reform is needed of France's tax and social security systems, and that there must also be new thought about how best to tackle unemployment.[9]

As for the European Community's plan for "completing the internal market" by the end of 1992, there are a host of major problems still to be resolved. A notable example is the EC harmonisation or approximation of taxes, as was made

[9] These matters were seriously analysed by Raymond Barre during his own presidential election campaign. See his interesting book, *Questions de confiance: entretiens avec Jean-Marie Colombani* (Flammarion, 1988).

THE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS

invites entries for the

1989 ERIC GREGORY AWARDS

A candidate must be:
British by birth; under the age of 30;
and may submit a published or unpublished collection of Belles-lettres, Poetry or Drama-Poems (not more than 30).

Closing date: 31 October 1988

1989 SOMERSET MAUGHAM AWARDS

Travel awards of £3,000-£4,000 to an author, British by birth, under the age of 35, for published work.

Closing date: 31 December 1988

Full details from:

Awards Secretary
The Society of Authors
84 Drayton Gardens
London SW10 9SB

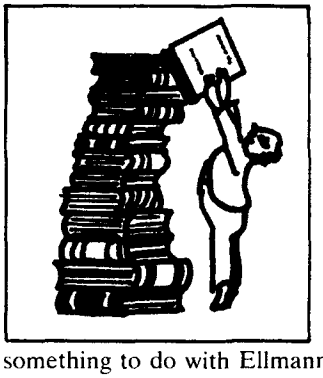
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

abundantly clear in the preliminary report of the so-called Boiteux Committee—or, more properly, the *Commission de Réflexion Economique pour la Préparation de l'Echéance de 1992*—a report which was submitted to Edouard Balladur, then Minister of Economics and Finance, in February of this year. These various considerations point to the advisability of having a Prime Minister, like Michel Rocard, who can work hand in hand with the President and who has a head for economic questions. By May 1988, conflictual *cohabitation* had apparently outlived its day. And any slight prospect of its revival was ruled out by the results of the June *legislative* elections, which, tight as they were, gave no majority to the *RPR-UDF* alliance.

Whether Jean Daniel's wider reflections on François Mitterrand will appear significant or not in seven or five years time is an interesting question. The challenges are there to see: the future handling of the domestic issue of immigration and nationality, and the framing of a more coherent and dignified policy—at national and European level—in respect of the Middle East.

A Personal Enquiry

Richard Ellmann as Biographer—By PARK HONAN



IN THE MOST unashamed way, I am going to draw on my acquaintance with Richard Ellmann and on a comment he made on my work. My object is not to puff myself or to imply that we were close friends (we never were). But since the man is revealed partly through what he said and the impression he gave, and that "man" has something to do with Ellmann, the biographer of Joyce and Wilde, I find it right to be personal about him—at the risk of seeming too autobiographical.

Ellmann is the best literary biographer to have written in English in our century. No one would call his *Joyce* or *Wilde* "academic"[1]; they lack the stiff, squeezed-dry aspect of other scholarly accounts of lives and do not play false with human experience and feeling. Yet he was an academic professional, leaving a post at Evanston in Illinois to take a chair of English at Oxford. He was a convivial figure at New College, even an early morning jogger. Shortly before he died he was teaching during autumn terms at Emory in Georgia.

I met him in the 1960s, not long after he published *James Joyce*. We exchanged letters, oddly enough about tax laws, and later I asked Weidenfeld & Nicolson to send him a copy of my *Matthew Arnold: A Life* (1981) as a matter of course. Neither my editor nor I were seeking a comment from him, and I would not have expected him to send me more than a postcard in acknowledgment, and so I was surprised by his letter from West Germany. "I have just this moment put down your book", Ellmann wrote to me from Höxter on 3 September 1981,

> ". . . with a great sense of having been successfully ushered through sixty-odd years of the 19th century. Your book succeeds abundantly in changing one's view of father (and mother) and son, but it also re-draws Arnold's character, so he is no longer the sombre character 'with Matthew Arnold's face' but has ebullience along with irony and intelligence and earnestness. The account of his life as school inspector is fascinating, as with the account of his American tour. Then there is your great coup in identifying Marguerite—a pity that she didn't at least bear him an illegitimate child—one feels for his embarrassment and humiliation, and welcomes the power of poetry to make so much out of their incomplete moments together. His life as a married man is also fascinating instead of (like most married lives) dull. . . . I've much enjoyed my four days in your company!"

How typical of his kindness, I thought. Dick Ellmann had no need to praise me—he owed me no favours—and certainly I had no need of his praise. After years of work on a biography one knows its merits and faults well enough oneself. (One may need praise during the writing, or require lavish praise after repairing the plumbing or wallpapering the bedroom.)

I HAD KNOWN DICK only slightly. At one meeting he seemed relieved to talk to me apart from other sherry-drinking guests at a reception; perhaps only because he knew I would listen. He was an excellent listener himself, and I may have chatted idly for five minutes; then he told me that he was not certain that he could ever adjust to being a professor at Oxford. He disliked committee-work, felt that he might be viewed as a shirker, and was anxious about his wife's health. On another occasion he was reluctant to talk about the present at all. He told me about interviewing Carl Jung in Switzerland on the subject of Joyce. I never had any illusion that I had penetrated the veil of Dick Ellmann, and felt that a soft wall of kindness kept us apart: he must have told others as much as he told me. But one tries to peer over walls, and I thought

[1] *James Joyce* (Oxford University Press, 1959, n.e. 1982) and *Oscar Wilde*. By RICHARD ELLMANN. Hamish Hamilton, £15.00.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(more than once) that what I detected on the other side was a mild, amiable confusion, self-doubt, a sense of feeling outdated and misplaced in a locale, out of touch with the self and everything else—in short, a profound and agonising humility, the first requirement for a biographer.

A SENSE OF DISLOCATION, confusion, and of being out of touch, with profound humility, I believed I had witnessed before. Bristling with a feeling of rivalry, I had met William Irvine on a luncheon date in London: he was far advanced in a biography of Robert Browning that I had intended to write. (I had a fellowship to help me advance my work.) Irvine, then in his fifties, with a gauzy device worn over one ear to conceal an inexplicable ailment, seemed vulnerable and lost. I took his arm to convey him to our restaurant. He stiffened slightly when I mentioned in passing several of his works, his *Bagehot*, or my feeling for the affinity of his prose style with that of Huxley in *Apes, Angels, and Victorians*. At luncheon, he was receptive, not as if he approved in the slightest way any theory or remark I advanced, but as if the kindest imaginable human radar screen—with mild and appropriate comments—were turning this way and that way to receive and sort out anything I said.

Irvine reached the perfection of biography in his chapters on Browning's first 50 years in *The Book, the Ring, and the Poet*, a book which I completed after Irvine died[2]; he had left his 21 chapters in beautifully finished form. Richard Ellmann reached his own perfection in *James Joyce*, a book which I came to know almost as well as Irvine's work. That is, I had read Ellmann's *Joyce* for about six months along with Joyce's *Ulysses*; the latter was the chief text that I discussed week by week with a dozen young women, late at night, in an informal "James Joyce Group" which I ran in the 1960s when teaching at a women's college. (We met in one or other of the girls' bedrooms, with most of the group in pyjamas, and I have seldom known freer or better discussions.) And so, as it seems to me, charmingly but also intimately I had come to know Ellmann's work and, similarly, Irvine's work, a little later.

The first thing to say is that—despite my impressions of Ellmann and Irvine as men, or as acquaintances—their biographical writing is anything but dislocated or tentative. It is painstaking and assured, with a flowing style that conceals the work that has been taken to be exact and authoritative. Irvine is one of the finest biographical stylists in English; he uses irony, rhythm, diction and images to give an exact sense of the Browning who appears in letters and other evidence. Strachey in *Eminent Victorians* had brought wit, grace of phrasing, and intelligence to biography but at the expense of delicate accuracy and truth. (It is typical of Strachey to have said that he would alter a fact, if need be, to save the rhythm of a sentence's ending.) Irvine brought the grace and suppleness of English into the service of accuracy and so moved beyond biographical writing of his time. Ellmann is less various and subtle than Irvine, but warm, confident, at ease, and exact in manner. If Irvine is elegant, Ellmann can be axiomatic almost to the point of a breezy vulgarity—while being perfectly just and controlled:

> "Joyce is the porcupine of authors. His heroes are grudged heroes—the impossible young man, the passive adult, the whisky-drinking greybeard. It is hard to like them, harder to admire them. Joyce prefers it so. Unequivocal sympathy would be romancing. He denudes man of what we are accustomed to respect, then summons us to sympathize."

And Ellmann, in style and form, brought something new to biography in the long paragraph of unified and concentrated subject-matter and accumulating effect. If the bane of biography is its multitude of facts, as the bane of an army of invasion might be its two million individuals, the facts (like the men) need not be reduced or pulverised or altered in being. But they must be marshalled and grouped, subordinated and cunningly organised. In a larger structural way, Ellmann's chapters deal with more than slices of chronological time and the "growth" of his subject. They have prevailing themes of their own, usually signalled or hinted at in each chapter's epigraph and sometimes in an opening sentence. Thus, for example, chapter eight in Ellmann's *Joyce* builds up shrewdly to Joyce's early experiences in France, its pleasures, broadening effects and accompanying stringencies, after the "Paris rawly waking . . ." epigraph from *Ulysses* and Ellmann's first narrative sentence, "Paris was Dublin's antithesis". In good biographies, and certainly in Ellmann's practice, everything *in effect* becomes narrative, and one of his own most effective skills is his ability to make literary criticism appear to advance his biographical "story".

"The form of biography", he wrote in *Golden Codgers: Biographical Speculations*, "is countenancing experiments comparable to those of the novel and poem. It cannot be so mobile as those forms because it is associated with history, and must retain a chronological pattern, though not necessarily a simple one."[3] A lively recognition of this, I think, led Ellmann to structure his chapters experimentally with careful attention to emotional growth or psychological change in his subject. The "Joyce" at the end of an Ellmann chapter is usually different from the "Joyce" at the start of it; perhaps more important, our view of Joyce through the chapter has taken on a new dimension. In a long biography, Ellmann takes elaborate pains to avoid the effect of repetition; and, in showing us the life of a writer whose art, year by year, may not be continuously or ceaselessly evolving, a literary biography may all too easily repeat its effects.

For example, Leon Edel's life of Henry James[4] is admirably detailed, but it is also wearisome: it keeps us for long stretches at the surface of events which, in effect, are telling us what has already been established by Edel in connection with James's habits and character. Edel's literary criticism is far from being feeble; but it is, often, hardly more than a

---

[2] William Irvine and Park Honan, *The Book, the Ring, and the Poet* (Bodley Head, 1975).

[3] Richard Ellmann, *Golden Codgers: Biographical Speculations* (Oxford University Press, 1973).

[4] Leon Edel, *The Life of Henry James: The Untried Years* (1953), *The Conquest of London* (1962), *The Middle Years* (1963). Revised edition in one volume (1985).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

compound of well-written plot-summary and speculative psycho-biographical theory. Edel traverses the span of his subject's life and works so that we feel little of importance that James did is being left out; however, he lacks Ellmann's quick, confident (and confidence-inspiring) penetration.

Ellmann avoids the effects of psychological theorising in both *Joyce* and *Wilde*. Indeed we are seldom prompted to question the authority of his biographical voice, his critic and presenter; it is not that we feel Ellmann is always right, but that there is a well-planned consistency in the pattern of his criticism within a book. We feel that what is being said of a work is not adventitious but intrinsic to a much larger, overall interpretation of Oscar Wilde or James Joyce. The intelligent consistency charms and compels; we want to see how the critical remark will be borne out in the larger pattern. He is appropriately bold, as for instance on the last story in Joyce's *Dubliners*: "The selection of details for 'The Dead' shows Joyce making those choices which, while masterly, suggest the preoccupations that mastered him." That does not point *out* of the biography to Freud but into the biography's presentational structure, and back towards the groundwork of an argument, as well as ahead to the promise of confirming evidence about the "preoccupations".

Ellmann could be delicious on Edel's habit of picking up and dropping of Freudian techniques. On the penultimate volume of *Henry James*, Ellmann writes in *Golden Codgers*,

> "Edel seems almost ready to give up Freud, as when he describes the turmoil in Henry James's mind: 'Two forces contended within: his intellect and his emotions. . . . Rational form and mind were thus interposed against the chaos of feeling.' This is the psychology not of Freud but of Alexander Pope. Apparently aware that his readers may be getting confused, Edel in the preface to this volume explains his biographical method . . . but isn't it peculiar to say, in this generation, that the emotional life has nothing to do with sex life or bowel movements?"

WHAT ELLMANN COULD NOT BEAR was the crass and easy underrating of the complexity of a subject's mind, or the resort to a fashionable idea to save the biographer the task of coming to grips with ambiguous and difficult evidence. There is also something oddly exasperated in Ellmann's comments on Edel, odd because (as in his dealings with me) he was unshowily generous with other biographers.

As a rule, no one could be less suited to reviewing a new biography than a biographer; novelists and historians make allowances for each other more readily, I think. In any case Ellmann's comments on Edel are professionally protective, as if he felt Edel had betrayed the guild or the mystery of the craft in slipshod Freudianising, and had failed to realise that a biographer's authority should not be compromised and, furthermore, must be earned and demonstrated throughout the narrative of a life. 500 scholarly footnotes do not earn authority, and mere factuality will never demonstrate one's understanding of the history of a person. But if authority is lost, all is lost, and unless it is evident nothing will be evident: nothing one says will then show and convince. Authority depends on the depth, range and imaginative alertness of one's research; it seems to depend on one's prose style and tone, also on structure within a chapter and the structural sequence of chapters; but most of all, for Ellmann, it depends on an attitude to personal evidence.

ON EXACTLY this matter, Leon Edel's pronouncements have been colourful but seldom subtle or particularly useful. In his brief *Literary Biography* (1957), Edel stated that "the biographer is called upon to take the base metals that are his disparate facts and turn them into the gold of human personality". Well, I have a room in my house called the Alchemist's Room because a member of my family makes jewellery there, and no more gold is made in it than the medieval alchemists made; gold is gold and nothing else. You have gold, or you don't, but no "base metals" are transformed into it, alas.

Ellmann certainly didn't subscribe to a transforming magic, but he did believe in historical evidence about persons. So far as I can judge, he felt that if what Edel calls "human personality" was not evident in the document, it was not recoverable. Not every figment of personality or aspect of a mind will be traceable in a letter by Joyce or Wilde, but it is clear Ellmann believed that in this genre one may combine, assimilate, extract and abstract—not create. One will fail in trying to turn one thing into something else.

He himself is not creative, and his comments on Joyce and Wilde (although too various to be categorised) might be very generally divided into two main kinds. Ellmann extracts from evidence about his subject at a given time, or he abstracts from the whole of the evidence he is aware of, to make a general remark about a subject's mind; and the generality will be an integral part of his biography's structure. For him, many kinds of combining are legitimate, but nothing else can be done in the way of transforming "disparate facts" into some conception of personality.

He was not too pleased with Painter's Freudianising or post-Freudianising in *Proust*,[5] though Painter seemed more "persuasive" in his use of psychology than Edel: Painter let himself be taken away from the judging of personal evidence to an external authority who produced universal truths. Once that happened, Painter, in Ellmann's opinion, lost hold of his materials and, invoking the psychology gods of our time, became careless with language, sometimes using "psychological interpretation half-literally, half-figuratively".[6] On the other hand, no particular wish to dispense with psychological insight or even modern psychological theory can be found in Ellmann's essays; his protest is usually against the fashionable biographical method of imposing "a proving frame" upon evidence, rather than facing the task of getting the evidence to yield what information it will. Ellmann aligns himself most with Strachey, oddly, in assuming an intelligent but sceptical reader. Biographical narrative within itself proves its own good sense.

[5] George Painter, *Marcel Proust: A Biography* (vol. 1, 1959, vol. 2, 1965).

[6] See *Golden Codgers*, ch. 1.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

London Review OF BOOKS

TWICE MONTHLY

'Without doubt the most vital and broadly based forum for intellectual opinion in the land' *Harpers & Queen – April 1988*

The LRB invites your close attention

People pay attention to the *London Review of Books*. The letters page proves it. Every issue of the paper these days is alive with controversy: A.N. Wilson and Barbara Everett dispute the authorship of Shakespeare's sonnets, Ann Dummett provokes Ray Honeyford and Roger Scruton to argue the point about anti-racism, A.J. Ayer challenges Christopher Norris to be precise about Paul de Man, Jonathan Culler comes to his defence . . . People pay attention to the LRB because of the attention the LRB pays to what is publishes. Subjects and reviewers are chosen with special care and the reviews are long enough to give each issue the consideration it deserves.

The range and quality of the articles is remarkable. Here is a selection from the 300 major reviews and features published in the LRB in the last year: **LITERATURE** – Alan Bennett on Kafka, Craig Raine on Saul Bellow, Marilyn Butler on computers and Jane Austen, Philip Roth on Primo Levi, Julian Barnes on Philip Roth, John Bayley on Angus Wilson. **LITERARY THEORY** – Frank Kermode on Marshall McLuhan, W.T.J. Mitchell on theories of criticism, George Steiner on Modernism. **Philosophy** – A.J. Ayer on causality and determinism, David Pears on A.J. Ayer, Hilary Putnam on Quine, Richard Rorty on Habermas, Raymond Williams on 19th-century ideologies, Thomas Nagel on the philosophy of mind. **HISTORY** – E.P. Thompson on the Ranters, Michael Howard on the Korean War, Peter Burke on Humanism, V.G. Kiernan on Treasons, Conrad Russell on 16th-century England. **ART HISTORY** – Lawrence Gowing on Coldstream, Nicholas Penny on Lucian Freud, David Sylvester on Giacometti. **MUSIC** – Susan Sontag on Wagner, Paul Driver on Boulez, Donald Mitchell on Hans Keller. **POLITICS** – Douglas Hurd on Tory achievements, Tam Dalyell on Tory misrule, Bryan Gould on Labour policy, R.W. Johnson on Ronald Reagan, Philip Towle on the INF Treaty, Edward Said on Central America, Seamus Heaney on Anglo-Irish relations, Paul Foot on Stalker. **PLUS** – M.F. Perutz on Klaus Fuchs, Angela Carter on Food, Hilary Mantel on Shere Hite, Richard Wollheim on anti-semitism, Gitta Sereny on Kurt Waldheim, Stephen Sedley on the Law – **POEMS** by Ted Hughes, James Fenton, Anthony Thwaite, Les Murray and Frederick Seidel – **STORIES** by Dan Jacobson, Guy Vanderhaeghe and Hanif Kureishi – **DIARIES** by Toby Forward, Ian Hamilton and Mike Selvey.

TRIAL OFFER: 3 MONTHS FREE

To understand the special character of the *London Review of Books* you need to read it for yourself. So we are offering you the chance to try the paper FREE for three months.

Here's how the offer works. For the price of a one-year subscription to the LRB you will receive it for fifteen months. That's 28 issues – six issues FREE. The first three months of your 15-month subscription is a trial period. You pay now, but at any time in the trial period you can cancel your subscription and get your money back.

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

Give the LRB a try. Fill in the form and return it with your payment now.

YES, I'd like to accept your trial offer and receive six free issues of the *London Review of Books*. Please enter ..... subscription(s) to the *London Review of Books* at the special rate for fifteen months (28 issues). I understand that if, after three months, I don't want to continue to subscribe, I can cancel my subscription and get a full refund.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

☐ I enclose a cheque for £ .... made payable to LRB Ltd. Please tick:
☐ **£25** (UK) ☐ **£35** (EUROPE) ☐ **£40** (REST OF WORLD) ☐ **$48** (USA)

☐ Please debit my Visa/Access/American Express/Diners Club Account No.

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Expiry Date. .....

☎ **01–388 7487**

Return to: London Review of Books, FREEPOST, Tavistock House South, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9BR, UK
(No stamp needed in UK)

E1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But whereas Strachey found character easy and knowable and would not take it seriously because the Victorians took it too seriously, Ellmann is a disciplined interpreter who knows that character *is* very difficult to estimate. An immense amount of research is undertaken and a complex, dense, but readable structure of history is offered to show a person, a portrait of Joyce or Wilde. For Ellmann, the Irish are the Israelites of our day, greater than their nation, exiled and dispersed, rich in spirit but also torn within, dominated and dominating, forced to fight or to beguile. Ellmann is fond of them. Wilde and Joyce used their Irishness to become heroes of art, of Western culture, in effect. But what are they as men?

TO SEE THEM steadily at all, perhaps, is to understand what it is to be modern. "On or about December 1910", wrote Virginia Woolf, "human character changed." Ellmann, in his essay on the epoch of pre-War courtliness and Edwardian literature, "Two Faces of Edward", would put back ten years Virginia Woolf's date of the momentous change: "If a moment must be found for human character to have changed", Ellmann wrote, "I should suggest that 1900 is both more convenient and more accurate than Virginia Woolf's 1910." Wilde, to an extent, anticipates the change; Joyce, who was eighteen in 1900, participates in it. The modern is not in passionate revolt and is not strictly religious or irreligious, though Edwardians looked "for ways to express their conviction that we can be religious about life itself". According to Ellmann, the modern writer shares with other Edwardians a belief in a secular miracle, the transformation of the self, or the possibility of its sudden alteration. So Joyce appears to agree with Yeats that if we pretend hard enough to be the mask or the self we adopt, we can become that other self; and this takes us back to Oscar Wilde, that peculiarly earnest poseur.

For the biographer, the modern writer exhibits an extreme self-consciousness in any case, and a fluid and never easily demonstrable character. For what self is the man who adopts masks, and seems to believe in them, ever expressing? Ellmann the biographer is "modernised" by his subjects, and it is not enough for him simply to record the changing patterns of Joyce's or Wilde's behaviour and utterances and being: he must understand a self-conscious subject even to chronicle its behaviour accurately.

THE IDEA that character changed in 1910 or 1900 is a useful myth, of course; but, it seems to me, a key aspect of the "change" occurs further back in Europe's cultural history. Goethe and the *Stürmer und Dränger* exhibited a new kind of self-consciousness in the 1770s. Goethe later explained that the old, innocent, almost somnambulatory poetry of his youth was no longer possible: "Daily criticisms in fifty different places, and gossip caused by them, prevent the appearance of any sound production", said Goethe finally. "He who does not keep aloof from all this, and isolate himself by main force, is lost." Wordsworth, Arnold and Emerson bewailed the new self-consciousness and the introversion needed to stay in touch with *some* self, or to know anything about anyone and write effectively. Isolation preserves individuality but separates one from most of one's material in society.

Hence we have anxious Victorian poems about isolation and the double-self, or dramatic monologues in which the poet can hardly be dissected away from the mask; and then Edwardian and Georgian works by Yeats, Joyce, Eliot and Pound in which the maker is in effect the mask. The biographer can only estimate and penetrate the mask by accepting the subject on the subject's terms, and this, I think, is why humility was so useful to Ellmann the academic intellectual, and why he could appear to be mildly confused.

His humility was natural; it led him through subjectivity and devotion to a full, confident understanding of two self-conscious writers. He had learned to be passive, hesitant, receiving, in two or three minds about the subject at hand; yet his performance in the two masterly biographies of Joyce and Wilde is cunning and surprisingly confident.

Somersby

The church squats like a grey toad,
huddled on the escarpment's edge
waiting for a mighty claw from heaven.
When we open the door, the cold hurts:

black pews and a blacker heaven
hidden among yews and leaking stones;
the hollow eye of the collecting bowl.
But that voice crying "Father, forgive them",

is the wind, surely, in the ugly tower,
guilt singing its familiar blackmail?

We stand, rigid in the empty porch,
words raining from coloured glass,

pain leaping from the saintly histories.
In leafless branches, ghosts weep,
children of our soiled imagination:
the taut farmers and parish councillors,

angry women with their sullen lives.
Outside, in the sun, the yews creak.
The sundial spreads its green corrosion.
Through frozen hedgerows, time leaks.

William Bedford

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books Encountered

Eton Voices. Interviews by DANNY DANZIGER. Viking, £14.95.

42 Old Etonians talk about their schooldays, with 15 prospectus-style photographs. The witnesses, the more obscure of them identified only by their occupations, italicised in the index, include one woman who had a bad time, various politicos, writers, publishers, actors, broadcasters, etc. OEs will love it, and won't need the glossary of slang. Others may think it a rip.

Darlinghissima: Letters to a Friend. By JANET FLANNER. Edited and with Commentary by NATALIA DANESI MURRAY. Pandora, £9.95.

Evocative, loving, gossipy letters to the book's editor by the late "Genêt" of *The New Yorker*. A few glimpses of Ross, much reading, many American friends but surprisingly few French; the perennial problems of compiling the Paris letter; sad stories of Nancy Cunard. A few misspellings like "Nora Belov" survive.

Myself with Others: Selected Essays. By CARLOS FUENTES. André Deutsch, £10.95.

Leisurely, genial, penetrating articles, some reworked from periodicals, on Fuentes's own writing, on Cervantes, Diderot, Buñuel, Borges, Kundera, García Márquez, and Latin American-US relations. Particularity and detail make them read as vividly as a novel.

The Blindfold Horse: Memories of a Persian Childhood. By SHUSHA GUPPY. Heinemann, £10.95.

Captivating vignettes of the author's upbringing in a patrician Persian family, when Reza Shah was modernising the country but before the oil boom and the Ayatollah. Modernity creeping in had not destroyed the past: but when Shusha Guppy left for Europe it was the real end of a long, equivocal transition—for Iran and for her.

Adult Pleasures. By DAN JACOBSON. André Deutsch, £12.95.

Tantalisingly brief "essays on writers and readers", the former including Byron, Disraeli, the Brontës, Tolstoy, Isaac Babel, Nadezhda Mandelstam, D. H. Lawrence, and Olive Schreiner. The tone is thoughtful, the titles teasing—e.g. "What's Eating Lara? (or Lord Byron's Guiltiest Secret)" and "Jew d'Esprit".

God and Two Poets: Arthur Hugh Clough and Gerard Manley Hopkins. By ANTHONY KENNY. Sidgwick & Jackson, £16.95.

The Master of Balliol traces the philosophical pilgrimages of two poets a generation apart: Clough from Anglican to agnostic, Hopkins from Anglican to Catholic. His quotations are used to elucidate meaning, not evaluate art: but they greatly illuminate both poets, especially the sometimes underrated Clough.

I, of all People: An Autobiography of Youth. By JAMES KIRKUP. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.95.

Perky, sometimes malicious, self-centred but self-deprecating memoirs. The blurb promises "hilarious anecdotes" about various literary figures: but only the Evelyn Waugh story is even mildly amusing. The real subjects seem to be Kirkup's bisexuality, loneliness, pacificism, and devotion to verse.

The Art of the Novel. By MILAN KUNDERA. Translated by LINDA ASHER and DAVID BELLOS. Faber, £9.95.

No treatise, but short, witty essays, mostly assembled from periodicals and originally written in French. Had Kundera read Cocteau's *La Difficulté d'être* before writing this? His prose in his adopted language (more or less preserved in this translation) has all the precise and surprising zest and sting of that book. Highly recommended.

Bonnie Prince Charlie: A Biography. By SUSAN MACLEAN KYBETT. Unwin Hyman, £12.95.

"Scurvy Prince Charlie" might be a better nickname: Mrs Kybett believes that he died of the disease, and her researches reveal a much less attractive figure than that of legend. Despite a lush dust-jacket with the Blanchet portrait all doll-like Technicolor elegance, this is a meaty, serious, scholarly book.

The Battle of Berlin 1945. By TONY LE TISSIER. Cape, £15.00.

Meticulously documented chronological account of the military action, lacking however any overall conclusions. These emerge, rather, in the narrative. One (as in most battles) is muddle; a second, Stalin's overriding political aims; a third, the Nazi commanders' concern for *sauve qui peut*. A close-run thing.

Europe: A Tapestry of Nations. By FLORA LEWIS. Unwin Hyman, £17.50.

Informative, impressionistic but accurate compendium by the "Foreign Affairs" columnist of the *New York Times*. Not quite on a par with Gunther's fascinating pre-War volume, but easily as good as its post-War counterparts. An appendix describes European institutions, national and Community.

God Land: Reflections on Religion and Nationalism. By CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN. Harvard University Press, $15.95, £9.95.

These being the William E. Massey Sr. Lectures in the History of American Civilisation, they concern the USA, not Ireland. What the author calls "the Irish Catholic breakthrough", however, is important to his theme: it was helped, perversely, by Joe McCarthy, and made possible Kennedy's election.

Trading Places: The Future of the European Community. By JOHN PALMER. Radius/Century Hutchinson, £20.00.

Nothing to do with Eddie Murphy, but the companion to a Granada TV series. The largely perceptive, critical author is European Editor of *The Guardian*. He favours, though, "a new political settlement in central Europe including the withdrawal of both NATO and Warsaw Pact forces". Will the Pact withdraw an equal 3,000 miles?

Quiller Couch: A Portrait of "Q". By A. L. ROWSE. Methuen, £14.95.

Much better than some of Rowse's more recent writings, criticised on this page: a really affectionate, fact-filled account of a friend, patron, and mentor, whose reputation as a bufferish pre-Leavisite bookman was too unkind to the man. Whether Q's books will survive is another question.

Mallarmé, or the Poet of Nothingness. By JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. Translated and Introduced by ERNEST STURM. Pennsylvania State University Press, $22.50, £14.80.

Fluent, accurate, and hence revealing translation of Sartre's partly biographical study, written in 1952, published in 1978. It shows Sartre caught, as so often, between doctrinaire political analysis, psychological insight, and a love of literature almost despite himself. This was Sartre the brilliant paradoxical talker: in print and out of French the flaws show.

Schools for Barbarians. By ISABELLE STAL and FRANÇOISE THOM. Translated by KEN CONNOLLY. With a Foreword by ALAIN BESANÇON. Claridge Press, £6.50.

Written before France's last *legislative* elections, this pamphlet partly blamed Socialism for the ills it described, and pinned not very confident hope on a change of régime. But its polemic against permissive slackness will strike a chord here, and surprise those who still think French education refreshingly (or depressingly) strict.

R.M.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FILM

How I Bribed Myself on a Film Festival Jury

By Alexander Walker

IT IS STRANGE how very few of those who are invited to sit on film festival juries ever get round to writing about their experience. But then evaluating the film tends to run a poor second to awarding the prizes.

I have served on the jury in Cannes, Berlin, Chicago and Cairo; and short of seizing power in a Latin American republic there can be few sweeter ways of tasting dictatorship in the world today. I admit that on each occasion I have come away from the experience feeling a worse man: which is not a contradiction. Power doesn't corrupt: not exactly. It is loss of power that corrupts absolutely. One minute, one's word is law. Then the verdict is delivered. The next, one is looking in vain for a place to sit at the Awards supper. But for ten to fourteen days on the annual circuit that stretches from Avoriaz in January to Hawaii in December, and taking in the other 287 film festivals happening somewhere in the world in the intervening months (according to *Variety*'s count in 1986), a jury member can be sure of being fêted, fretted over and fawned upon.

Bribery and corruption are supposedly the perennial perks attached to the job of juryman. In my experience, they are not so insidious as vanity and flattery. Yet sometimes they prove true. Indeed, one sometimes is offered a straight bribe for a guaranteed vote; it happened to me and eight other jurors at one Cairo film festival.

A minor Middle East oil-state, which had recently begun sending its 16mm productions to international festivals, made overtures to the jury to honour its latest film in return for £10,000. The sum was to be split equally between the nine of us. At least this was fairer than buying votes individually for whatever the vendor thought he or she was worth: safer, too, as we would all be implicated. But the Western sense of guilt isn't so easily mocked or served. No sooner had the offer been made than we felt obliged to report it to the official guardian of our integrity.

"Ten thousand pounds!" this gentleman cried. "I hope you refused!" We did indeed, we said smugly. "They insult you", he went on. "I'm glad you turned it down. They'll have learnt their lesson. Ten thousand pounds. . . ! Not nearly enough!"

Of course, there are "bribes" and "inducements", and the line between them is sometimes hard to draw.

ONE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL used to reckon that everyone it invited to sit on its jury had to come all the way from Hollywood, by air, first-class, return. It insisted on forwarding the amount to cover such expenses, even if one lived less than an hour's flying time from where the festival was held. This attractive flat rate is no longer available. Perhaps there were complaints from jury members who really had to come from Hollywood.

But as regards bribing the individual jury members, major-league festivals of today are relatively free from suspicion. The lengths they go to in protecting one's virtue can even be irritating. One is chaperoned closely by the jury secretary; one has to sign into the screenings at Cannes, lest one's absence be questioned; even going to the loo during the projection of the movie requires a nice calculation of how long the necessity is likely to take—too long, and the film's producer, who seems to have his eyes (or his deputy's) continuously fixed on the jury *loge*, may lodge a complaint, requiring the incontinent absentee to sit through the whole film again.

I was once shooed away from a film company's luncheon in Cannes by none other than Robert Favre LeBret, the austere and dreaded president of that festival. He secreted himself inside the restaurant door precisely to protect his jurors from such lapses of protocol by the hosts as wrapping up banknotes of large denomination in the table napkins of influential guests.

But it would not only be very foolish of a film company to try to buy an award for its film in advance: it would be quite unnecessary, too. Most of the blandishments and pressures that determine how the prizes will go, come from within the jury room. The jurors usually do a good enough job of prearranging their own prize-giving without prompting from hungry *papabili*.

From the minute the festival organisers begin to select the jury, generally six months before the event, to allow for drop-outs, the prize-winners begin to be selected.

I must qualify this with a *caveat*. I don't think it is ever possible for a festival to *guarantee* a prize to such and such a producer if only he will put his film into the competition. Which, of course, doesn't stop producers trying. There have been quite a few instances at various festivals of those who expected to be among the winners being cruelly disappointed at

ALEXANDER WALKER *is film critic for the "London Evening Standard" (he has twice been named Critic of the Year) and a frequent broadcaster on the arts on radio and television. His publications include biographies of Garbo (1980), Peter Sellers (1981), Joan Crawford (1983), and Vivien Leigh (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987). This article is an extract from his latest book "'It's Only a Movie, Ingrid': Encounters on and off the Screen" to be published by Headline Books on 8 September at £12.95.*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the *palmarès* ceremony, and making no secret of their belief that they were robbed. But this usually comes from expectations being pitched unnaturally, if understandably, high by the festival organisers, who are loath to let a famous name believe he won't come away enriched by a major prize if he permits them to screen his long-awaited and much publicised new production. It is not an edifying sight when the votes are in and the expected name is absent. The late Glauber Rocha, the leading exponent of *cinema novo* in Brazil, was such a poor loser at one Venice festival that he pursued the jury with his vocal protests for several hundred yards along the Lido. It gained him attention, if not an award; and it looked good on television at home. The great Visconti, to whom, one would think, one award more or less mattered not at all, threw himself into a furious pet at Cannes in 1971 when *Death in Venice*, which had looked a certainty, was routed by Joseph Losey's *The Go-Between*. He had to be (partially) mollified by a hastily minted award for his collective works.

Dirk Bogarde recounts a vituperative run-in with the festival authorities when he served at Cannes as president of the jury in 1987. Not only had John Huston's *Under the Volcano* failed to win a prize, but Bogarde and his fellow jurors set their face against even "the Visconti palliative" of making an official *hommage* to Huston. The festival had deemed one or other honour to be such a matter of course that it had had no reservations about encouraging Huston to come all the way to the South of France from the up-river compound that he occupied for most of the year in South America. "Six thousand miles", the jurors were sternly reminded. How *could* they refuse an award or an honour in the circumstances? It was not seemly. It was not *honnête*. To which, according to Bogarde, an unnamed juror retorted: "Listen! You do *not* win the fucking *Palme d'or* for travelling!"

True: but you can win it without much physical effort of any kind—provided the right jury-mix has been achieved in advance.

Over the years, reports from behind the closed doors indicate that individual jurors tend to vote according to the expectations that led to their appointment. Knowing this, the films that a festival wants to see honoured can often be spoken for before the voting is recorded. There have been famous exceptions; but the general principle holds true.

A pro-Hollywood bias, a Left-wing inclination, a Post-modernist sympathy or a Youth-cult trendiness: it's a case of "pick 'n' mix" being adroitly related to the complexion of the entries. Both are usually prerogatives of the festival director(s). In the jury room, there are few surprises: the jurors get to know each other very, very well during the ten days they share their duties and pleasures. Where surprises are experienced is among the accredited festival-goers, critics, *chroniqueurs*, producers, distributors, free-loaders, etc. For they will have been judging what they've seen on the screen and discussing its fitness for an award: very few of them will have been second-guessing the minds, attitudes, and prejudices of the jurors who are actually deciding the day's winners and losers.

Odd things happen to jurors as soon as they are convoked for the first time to meet each other and be inducted into the rituals of their craft. Prominent among them is the consumption of much food and drink while trying to memorise strange-sounding names. These may belong to a far-off critic about whom we know little, or an instant celebrity about whom we knew nothing until he or she became a "media personality" and thus eligible to pass judgment on Tarkovsky or Cavalier or Greenaway or Kwon-Taek Im. It is a universal principle that jurors love power. But it's a human failing that they also want to be loved for themselves—a fact that has mellowed many a long-serving autocrat. One way of being loved is plainly to give popular awards. A shrewd festival director can hint that while currying favour is not the reason for their coming together at Cannes, Berlin or Tokyo, nevertheless keeping as many as possible of the competitors and the audiences reasonably happy and contented is a noble alternative.

This has been assisted in recent years by the fissionable nature of the main prizes. At one time they used to be awarded to single films and solo stars; now they tend to be *ex aequo* citations, shared between two or even more contenders. This may look fair enough—until one realises that a split award doesn't signify equality of achievement but stalemate on the jury.

It is appalling how swiftly and naturally jurors turn into politicians and start making bargains, horse-trading with each other and even reneging on understandings or promises.

Even when there is no split vote, there's a rule of natural justice that is just as pernicious. This is that only one prize shall be given to each worthy film. A film that has already been awarded a prize for direction, is extremely unlikely to be awarded another for its star's acting. It has happened, yes: but usually it takes a jury-room mutiny. Jurors have little inducement to turn into mutineers, since between films they are kept, or keep themselves, in an almost continuous state of indigestion, constipation, or even intoxication.

The shrewd festival director picking his jury can take additional precautions.

The *persona* whom such a director will find most *grata* is another festival director. For one thing, he knows the ropes already; for another, he can be trusted not to rock the boat. Festival directors usually live well in the barren months between their own annual events. Quite a number of them are resigned to doing extra-curricular work at their colleagues' festivals, provided this encompasses a room (*de luxe*) and board (*à la carte*) and, of course, first-class travel (*pour deux*). If Chekhov's eternal student were alive and well today, he would probably be trying to set up a film festival or doing the rounds of other people's.

Next on the "acceptable" list are very distinguished filmmakers. They make good jurymen, provided they haven't yet

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

begun to live off their past distinction, instead of their current box-office. It's even less desirable that they should have languished in limbo for any length of time while trying to set up their next movie. If the laurels they wore in their heyday have turned into a crown of thorns, they can become very nasty indeed, and be tempted to use their power in the jury room to pay off old scores, real or imagined, against the individuals or film companies that have scorned them or, worse still, grabbed their glory.

FAMOUS FILM STARS are dodgy for the same reasons; but they have several factors in their favour. One is that they are famous; and since a festival nowadays lives or dies by publicity, a few faces that lend a semblance of celebrity to the locality are welcomed like overnight divinities.

Another advantage of film stars on the jury is the likelihood that they won't have been to any movies for years. An exception, you'd think, should be made for those they star in; but even that is doubtful, now that many have been released from any contractual obligation to support the publicity by attending the *première*. Only if they own box-office percentages do most stars today feel any need to come out at night and shine at their own films. Therefore they can be counted on to approach their work on the jury without any preconceived notion of what it's about, what's "in" or who's "out". This renders them susceptible to winks and nods, as broad or as subtle as the impressionable celebrity is used to picking up from his or her director (or publicist).

Film critics who get on to juries have, of course, seen plenty of movies; too many, maybe, for their own or the festival's good. But accepting an invitation to serve as a juror can very effectively draw their fangs. Possibly for the first time in their lives, they are made to feel like film stars. They know what it is to be photographed, interviewed, recognised by a reserved *loge* and not simply a commonplace by-line, and to gain a reflected glamour from the real tinsel among their fellow jurors.

Someone who has suddenly had celebrity thrust on him or her is more than welcome to a festival director. A best-selling novelist, a Women's Movement activist, a "refusenik" poet, a dissident politician, even (God help us!) a television presenter: someone who has never made any visible or suspected contribution to cinema will be greeted as a great *coup*.

Such people bring their own charisma with them: fresh, topical, controversial or popular and, above all, easily identifiable by the mass media covering the festival, who are grateful for the excuse such non-specialists give them to forget about the films for a while.

These non-specialist jurors are usually disliked by the specialists; they are supposed to act as ballast, but frequently behave as if they were the cargo.

Women jurors are a danger area. Many a festival director has planted his foot firmly on it, only to discover a land-mine where he thought there was fertile earth. There are various reasons—all of them dishonourable—for selecting women to be on a festival jury. Women are seen as representing (*a*) their own sex, (*b*) the Women's Movement, (*c*) glamour. In other words, they are viewed generically. "We need a woman—would Charlotte Rampling be free?" is a query I actually heard from a festival chief. No one has ever heard anyone say, "We need a man—let's try Klaus-Maria Brandauer".

It's a nice irony that such generic selection can be the undoing of a festival. For alliances made by gender, if a jury contains several women, prove extremely difficult to deal with, especially as the festival director is usually male. Thus Pauline Kael (critic of *The New Yorker*) and Marthe Keller (the Swiss actress), contributed to some unusually contested jury sessions at Cannes in 1977. When the jury president, Roberto Rossellini, died suddenly a few weeks later, some cynics said, "No wonder!" Ingrid Bergman actually broke the jury's vow of silence in 1973, when she was president, to express her disgust at *La Grande bouffe*, that marathon tale of self-immolation by gluttony, even before the film had been brought to official judgment. Françoise Sagan turned round several months after she had served as president at Cannes in 1979 and made public allegations of "pressure"—the festival, in turn, riposted with its allegations of unpaid telephone bills. An unedifying *contretemps*.

Guglielmo Biraghi, the Rome film critic who also runs the Taormina, and lately the Venice festivals, met the feminist problem head-on one year by picking an all-female jury. The result was sharp disunity almost from the first vote.

THE MOST PREDICTABLE jury members used to be card-carrying members of the Communist Party. One knew where they stood, which line they toed. At least, one used to. Since the advent of *glasnost*, this old certainty has gone the way of many others. I met Elem Klimov, the Russian director, shortly after Gorbachov's cultural revolution had enabled this former "dissident" to seize power in the Soviet film unions and declare that reforms were on the way.

"What kind of films can we expect to come from Russia in future then?" I asked him.

"Bad ones", was his cynical reply. Reforming the ways didn't necessarily entail refining the means. It was the same man, when president of the Cannes jury in 1987, who was reported to have swung his vote successfully against not one, but two of his own countrymen who had films in the festival of which he disapproved. You see how tricky it's become, having a Communist on the jury.

It used to be easy; the Soviet juror was a reliable man; the fact that he had been let out at all, to serve on a tribunal generally made up of Western capitalist representatives, was proof of his own orthodoxy. He voted first for the Russian entry; then for the Eastern-Bloc film; then for the film from the Western country with the strongest Communist Party. Nowadays, he is as likely to be found voting for the American entry.

More loosely labelled "radicals" are another matter entirely. They are notoriously volatile. All sorts of things set them off—and not necessarily films. Let a police horse step on a demonstrator's toe in far-away Milan, and by some seismic tremor of sympathy the radical juror at Cannes, or wherever, threatens to resign to show his solidarity with the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lamed one—and will probably try to take the rest of the jury out with him in a joint show of anti-fascist feeling.

No, it is not easy to assemble a film festival jury: but once you have done so, your problems, far from beginning, may actually be half over. The jury will do the work for you and, in the process, compromise itself without realising it.

I WAS A MEMBER of the jury at Cannes in 1974. That year, René Clair was the president. He was then 75; it was 50 years since he had directed his first film, *Paris qui dort*, and 9 since his last, a Franco-Romanian co-production (always a bad sign) called *Les Fêtes galantes*. He was a member of the *Académie Française*; and meeting every Thursday to preserve the purity of the French language had kept his mind lively and his wit bright. We soon discovered a mutual appreciation of the linguistic absurdities that the modern vernacular had introduced. Clair was a very small, delicate man, not unlike a bird in the way he cocked his head as I talked to him, as if it assisted the acuteness of his hearing. He all but hopped along, too, on the look-out for any detail of life or manners that accident scattered, like breadcrumbs, in front of him. As we walked down the once elegantly Edwardian sea front, *La Croisette*, he looked up at one of the pompous ferro-concrete blocks of flats that were being erected on its gracefully curving crescent and quoted disdainfully from a billboard which advertised "*Appartements de Grand Standing*". The "Franglais" annoyed him.

"*Comment cela s'appelle en anglais*?" he asked.

"Apartments *de luxe*", I said.

From that instant we were friends, common victims of the indignities great languages suffer when they fall into unworthy hands.

The other members of the jury were unusually sympathetic, too. Monica Vitti had to be more than a token woman: she disappeared off to Rome two days into our judging, to vote in the Plebiscite for Divorce (it was lost) and then, on her tardy return, had to endure a crash course in viewing all the films she'd missed. After every screening, she signed the jury register, "*Veni, vidi, Vitti.*"

Irwin Shaw was the American juror, even though he had been resident in Switzerland for many a tax-free year. He was then enjoying a great comeback in popularity and solvency; and his novel *Rich Man, Poor Man* had found a new audience as one of the earliest mini-series successes. "It's found its level, too", he used to say, without self-disparagement. Shaw needed his liquor to make the day shorter or, perhaps, bearable. Under the "tough American" exterior of the ex-GI who had settled in Europe on a writing grant, he was a deeply melancholy man. Tennis and/or whisky frequently made him late for jury meetings: he had to be summoned by telephone and would pick up the receiver and, without waiting to hear who was calling, answer guiltily, "*Oui, j'arrive . . . j'arrive.*"

Then there was Jean-Loup Dabadie, one of the cleverest dialogue writers of the later New Wave, particularly of Claude Sautet's films; Kenne Fant, of Sweden, president of *Svensk Filmindustri*, but a novelist as well as the representative of corporative power; the French film critic Michel Soutter; his compatriot Félix Labisse, a rather sad-looking artist who played the dormouse in our deliberations; and, lastly, a veteran Russian film-maker, who had turned up at Nice Airport in response to the invitation issued to a totally different Russian film-maker who had apparently not been granted a permit to travel; he looked rather like Mischa Auer's double.

Ours was a solidly-based European jury; even the American was an expatriate.

Our duties were not onerous. If we found it inconvenient to attend an official screening, another was set up in next to no time. But we were closely guarded against intruders, and discouraged from fraternising with anyone who might have a vested interest in the results. The real hardship came from the numbers of luncheons and dinners that the jury was expected —indeed commanded—to attend. We didn't just sing for our supper; sometimes we had to eat two suppers a night, gracing them with our presence. Our virginity was never in danger: most of the others present had no interest in the films. Still, it was an unrivalled way to meet the Mayor of Cannes, the Chief of police, the Prefect of the *Alpes-Maritimes*, and the Bishop of the region. Facing these authoritarian figures seated at intervals round the same table, one felt a little like an extra in a Jean Genet play. One half-expected them to throw off the trappings of office and assume their favourite film fantasies. But no; none of them, it seemed, ever went to the movies.

As jurors we got on well together: but the first cracks in our conviviality appeared on the morning we were driven up to the Villa Yakimour. This elegant white residence stood on a hilltop overlooking Cannes and the Mediterranean. It was the home of the Begum Aga Khan, the former French beauty queen and now a graceful if Junoesque dowager, pleasingly frank in her opinions and even refreshingly laconic about her own status, present and future.

"And did you see what is in store for me?" she asked me, when the small-talk had turned to Egypt, Abu Simbel, and the white marble tomb topped by the single red rose in which her late husband, the Aga Khan, is interred. I had visited it some months earlier.

"Yes", I said, hesitantly, recalling how the carved inscription on the tomb had petered out in an area of polished blank marble . . . where the Begum was to have her own interment recorded one day.

"'Here is my space'", she said, quoting *Antony and Cleopatra*, with an amused lift of her eyebrows. How odd to enjoy all the jet-set life-style and know one's "space" is reserved in the tombs of Egypt.

THE VILLA'S REMOTENESS from Cannes—as well as its secure defences—made it an ideal location for the jury's secret deliberations. And the Begum was in the custom of lending it every year for that purpose, entertaining everyone to lunch after she had had the results formally announced to her first, in courteous repayment for her hospitality.

The villa was indeed a beautiful place, sitting amid lawns

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enamelled with flowers of hyper-brightness. Being given relatively unrestricted access to it was one of the real privileges of jury service.

We met in the library, a room with a high vaulted ceiling painted in scarlet and olive, pleasantly reminiscent of a desert ruler's tented encampment. Appropriately, too, security had been built into the décor. "*Les fenêtres sont blindées* (the windows are bullet-proof)", Gilles Jacob, the festival's executive director, whispered to us. (One gets to value such details when one runs a film festival.)

It was about 9.15 a.m. when we got down to voting for the winners; and we quickly hit difficulties.

CANNES MAKES IT A RULE to have an odd number of jurors: that way, one avoids hung decisions—or such is the theory; in practice, it may not work. It didn't this time. Four of us voted straight off for Francis Ford Coppola's *The Conversation* and four for Pier-Paolo Pasolini's *One Thousand and One Nights*. René Clair refused to use his casting vote, being reluctant to incur the resentment of the losing faction so early on in our proceedings. And he called an adjournment.

This created intense and understandable vexation in Robert Favre LeBret and his deputy Gilles Jacob. Both of them were "sitting in" with us, bringing their "presence", if not actually their "persuasiveness" to bear on the deliberations. Now they saw us all troop out into the gardens for a breathing-space and an informal exchange of opinions, barely ten minutes after we had begun.

This is when festival directors see aeroplane schedules looming even more imminently than festival awards. If the jury cuts things too close, there may be no time to get the prize-winners to Cannes for the night's ceremony. In the old days, the stars, directors, *et al.*, lasted the whole festival through; nowadays, one gulp is enough for most celebrities, and only a guaranteed award or some other fail-safe honour will lure them back for the gala *clôture*. And here were we, the jury, impervious to such imperatives, insisting on serving art and merit, rather than the flight schedules of *Air France*.

We were all strolling along the terrace, engaged in earnest little confabs of one or two people, in French and English, when I was startled to hear our Russian juror saying, in his perfect but assertive English, "All this is in our past!" He was addressing the Begum Aga Khan, who had emerged from the salon to see if all was well with us and why we had quit the library. The Russian waved a hand around him, indicating, beyond any doubt, his disapproval of the luxury and privilege the rest of us had lately been admiring.

Not one bit put out by his uncompromising Marxism, Her Highness granted him a gracious smile. "I am glad to say, *monsieur*, it is still in my present."

As we walked and talked, it soon became clear that those of us whose native tongue was English, or who were fluent in it—Shaw, Fant, Dabadie and myself—were for Coppola; the Latins and the non-English speakers—namely Clair, Vitti and Labisse, were for Pasolini—and, of course, this self-styled Communist film-maker got the Russian's vote, too, though he could hardly have felt easy with the homo-eroticism of Pasolini's version of the Arabian Nights.

Shaw and I took René Clair aside and tried to bring him round to our way of thinking. Suddenly, both of us realised that Clair simply hadn't comprehended one crucial line of dialogue in *The Conversation*. This is the remark that Gene Hackman's private eye picks up on his tape recorder early on in the film when he is shadowing two young suspects. It makes him think they're plotting a murder. He only realises his mistake much later on, replaying the tape, when a different context lends the line a radically different emphasis—the man he had previously seen as a victim has now to be considered a potential killer. Since the French subtitle had been identical each time the line of dialogue had been spoken, the fatal nuance had failed to carry its meaning to Clair (and, I suspected, to others).

Immediately Shaw and I explained to Clair how the dialogue represented a cunning narrative twist, his face lit up. "*Mais c'est génial!*" he piped up, "It's genius!"

We went back indoors and took a second vote and this time Coppola won by one vote. Even then, a bargain had to be struck. It was agreed that if the jury made Coppola's film the *unanimous* winner of the *Palme d'or*, then the *Prix spécial du jury* (the second prize) would go *unanimously* to the Pasolini film. Even at this late stage, the Russian made an attempt, admittedly half-hearted, to win recognition for his country's effort, a version of Tom Sawyer shot on the Volga, so bad as to be embarrassing even when mentioned in conversation. Now we were seriously being asked to consider it for an award. We hardly knew what to say. Favre LeBret saved us the trouble, anyhow. His voice, harsh with contempt, cut through our paralysis.

"*Nous serions des cons, voter pour un tel film* (we'd be idiots to vote for a film like that)." The Russian shrugged. In his heart, under his Party card, he no doubt agreed; but he'd done his official best.

The rest of us pretended we hadn't heard Favre LeBret, while privately blessing him for an interjection that broke all the rules.

After a self-congratulatory glass of the Begum's champagne, we passed on to the acting awards.

GENE HACKMAN WAS the obvious choice as "Best Actor". But since *The Conversation* had just been awarded the premier prize, it would be indecent to give it a second mark of distinction. Poor Hackman was a loser before a single vote was taken. Jack Nicholson was next in line, for his hugely sympathetic performance in *The Last Detail*, as the Marine military policeman escorting a hapless young "grunt" to a term of incarceration and deciding to give the kid a "good time" *en route* to the stockade. Nicholson's rival was Jean-Paul Belmondo in the title role of Alain Resnais' film *Stavisky*.

The discussion was sharply conducted. Nicholson came out the winner. What counted in his favour, I think, was his ebullient presence in Cannes. He is one of the few superstars who makes access to himself easy; he must have done two dozen interviews and kept a high public profile, too. (Of course, he was no stranger to Cannes: long before he became a star, he

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had come to "hustle" his early films with Corman and Monte Hellman on the *Croisette*.) The award to him simply confirmed that a star who "puts himself/herself around" commends "herself/himself" to jurors, who aren't impervious to fan worship.

But now it was glaringly obvious that "the French have to get *something*", as Irwin Shaw said, after the third glass of champagne. Resnais' lack of an award was an embarrassment to us: but so it had been to the festival since 1968. His film *Je t'aime, je t'aime* might have won that year, except that the festival was ended abruptly and violently when Godard, Truffaut and other French film industry radicals showed their sympathy with the strikes that had paralysed the rest of France by pulling the curtains across the screen at the *Palais des Festivals* and causing Favre LeBret to cancel the event after ten days of strife.

Unfortunately for Resnais, a majority of the jury felt that *Stavisky* wasn't up to his best standards. Then someone (I have a feeling it was myself) recalled that Charles Boyer was in the film, playing a venal baron. Why not honour Boyer? Not just for his role in *Stavisky*, but for his "contribution to cinema including his role in *Stavisky*". This face-saving manoeuvre is known as an *hommage*. It is usually deployed, as it was this time, when the jury is stuck; it unsticks everyone like some magic solvent. We eagerly voted Boyer his *hommage* and glowed with humanity as well as hubris and had another glass of champagne.

Later, we were badly rattled when Boyer, correctly guessing our motivation, berated us for our impertinence and called it an insult to Resnais. He probably wouldn't have accepted it; but a prize-winning film like *Stavisky* gets an invaluable publicity windfall when a clip of it (as well as a star in it) is seen on the French TV-coverage of the Cannes *palmarès* on the very eve of its opening in dozens of Paris cinemas. Boyer was persuaded to go up and receive his *hommage*. He reserved a scowl for us as he passed the jury box.

He was dead right, of course: we had behaved meanly to a great cinema personage by turning him into a token figure.

IT WAS VERY SOON REALISED that we hadn't much in the way of choice when we came to award the "Best Actress" prize. This isn't an unusual "discovery" at international film festivals. Male actors still dominate the screens in national cinema: festivals simply replicate the imbalance. We decided to vote for Marie-Josée Nat in Michel Drach's wartime family "weepie", *Les Violons du bal*. French honour was satisfied, though it's more doubtful if French art was served.

By now we were on our sixth glass of champagne. Intoxication of various kinds and degrees had set in. We were hell-bent on ennobling almost anything that moved on the screen. We had a couple of extra prizes we could award at our discretion—for technical achievement, and so on—and we couldn't wait to parcel them out.

Then it struck someone that Carlos Saura had not been honoured. There was a good reason for that. The Spanish director's entry, *La Prima Angelica* (*Cousin Angelica*), hadn't been considered among his best films; up to then no one had pushed very strongly for it. But now the name "Franco" was mentioned—and suddenly we all began to play politics.

It was clearly unthinkable for Saura to return home to "Fascist Spain" without a prize from Cannes to reinforce the Spanish cinema's fight against censorship and political repression. Anyhow, he had been loyal to Cannes for many years. In spite of the "repression", he seemed enviably prolific and seldom failed to have a film ready for selection. In a few moments, we had voted Saura a special jury prize and felt we had also done our bit to assist Spain's return to democracy. Such is hubris.

We went on to give another special prize for technical artistry. And then, drunk with power, as well as the Begum's cellar, we resolved on a final show of strength.

There was a general feeling that year, among the festival-goers, that it had not been a vintage event. The standard of the official competition, it was claimed, should have been higher. We decided to associate ourselves with this popular feeling; we would add a postscript to the awards deploring the unsatisfactory selection, thus confirming our independence of the festival authorities while giving them a reproving rap on the knuckles.

And we would have done so, had the "festival authorities" not forestalled us. No doubt they were used to the mutinous dementia that grips juries in the last stages of judgment. Leaning reproachfully across the table, they reminded us that we had already done far more than our duty. We had named three *additional* prizes: one for Boyer, one for Saura, one for technical artistry. Our generosity was commendable. The prizes were all worthy. But how could we now go on to deliver a general rebuke to the festival for the lack of opportunity it had given us to show our wisdom by rewarding the deserving? It did not make sense.

A silence fell over us. We had been well and truly outflanked. The censure motion was forgotten.

We were spared further embarrassment by the appearance of the Begum's butler who announced, "*Madame . . . messieurs . . . Son Altesse vous invite à déjeuner.*"

The Begum Aga Khan received us in the dining-room and had the results formally communicated to her. The festival directors seemed well pleased with them; and indeed they should have been. In virtually every instance, the prizes had fallen out the way Cannes wanted them to do that year—and all without bullying or bribery.

At the time, I was surprised at how well we had done. It had seemed a bit like a mind-reading act on the stage. One is so gratified and bewildered by the accuracy of the illusionist's "reading" that one forgets one has involuntarily been led to agree with what was in *his* thoughts from the very first. All festivals do it: Cannes has brought it to a high art.

THINGS WORKED WELL at Cannes, of course, because we were a homogeneous jury and reasonably free of cultural schisms. When dissension breaks out on a festival jury, it means trouble for everyone.

A few years earlier, I was on the jury at the Berlin Film Festival. At that time it was held in the month of June, which

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turned Berlin into a hot and airless city, instead of in icy February, as the world festival calendar now requires. The pressure didn't come from the festival directors; it was applied by a jury member whose commitment to Jean-Luc Godard went well beyond critical and even rational support. He kept up a continuous querulous refrain. If Godard didn't get a prize, how could this juror return home? If Godard didn't get a prize, what would people think of the Berlin film festival? If Godard didn't get a prize, would the youthful rebels who had forced Cannes to close in 1968 not be impelled to do the same in the streets of Berlin? If Godard didn't get a prize . . . and so on for hours, it seemed.

The lobbying was conducted with a persistence that was deaf to any objection. It was self-defeating. The opposition to Godard only hardened. When we finally broke up, we had decided our list of prize-winners—and Godard wasn't on it. Even after a few nightcaps at the Hotel Kempinski, we were sober enough to resist our fellow juror's last-ditch (as we imagined) plea to create a special prize for Godard.

We had to return after breakfast the next morning—the morning of the prize-giving—in order to "justify" our choices. The process of "justification" is a horrendous part of jury service in Berlin—or used to be. It was like sitting one's "A" level exams all over again. In part, it served a useful purpose; it was intended to help the trilingual translation of the reasons for the prizes. The German, French, and British jurors made themselves individually responsible for the citation that followed the announcement of each prize. But this meant that the three jurors not only had to compose an appropriate citation, they had also to reconcile them in all three languages and *then* submit them for approval to the other jurors whose knowledge of English, French or German might be more than a little imperfect. It was a nightmare. It lasted all through a working lunch until well into the afternoon. I have since decided it was the festival's shrewd way of seeing us "off the premises", so exhausted that we couldn't make any protest even if we'd felt inclined, we were so glad to see the back of the job.

But on this occasion, anger erupted almost the moment we sat down. For Godard's tireless hustler, who had left Berlin by train before dawn and hence escaped our labours, had paid his respects on a number of jurors in the early hours of the morning and had pleaded with the more malleable ones to reopen the voting just as soon as we were convoked later in the day.

A political conscience, it seems, doesn't sleep as soundly as an artistic one. A couple of the jurors had woken up feeling that maybe Godard had been treated unjustly. It took nearly two hours to quell the incipient mutiny. It was achieved only when the majority of the jury threatened to stage a public walk-out if any attempt were made by the dissident jurors, by vote or voice, to pay tribute to Godard.

I am quite sure Godard would have loved the ruckus. As it turned out, he was denied the triumph of anarchy as well as a prize. The waverers backed down. Dr Alfred Bauer, then the festival director, mopped his brow with relief; and that night we had to endure several minutes of frustrated rage from the Marxist claques in the Zoo-Palast audience when they realised that Godard wasn't going to be paid the homage traditionally his due.

All too soon, it was the turn of Rainer Maria Fassbinder, whose name on a festival film *had* to be honoured by any jury that feared for its political credibility and, in some places, its physical safety.

On many occasions, Orson Welles accepted the call to *hommage* which was made at festivals great and small, largely for the reason that, like Mount Everest, *he was there*. (The reason he was there, of course, was that he had been invited and it seemed a good idea to escape his creditors for a while and have his immediate living expenses taken care of.) Welles's appearance eventually became a slightly pathetic running joke with those of us who witnessed it often enough. But I consider it a far more pardonable gesture by jurors than the political reflex which prompts them to vote for Left-wing film-makers irrespective of the quality of the works in competition.

Ingmar Bergman, Woody Allen, Federico Fellini, David Lean, and Stanley Kubrick are among the artists who never win prizes at film festivals. The reason is simple and honourable. They refuse to allow their films to be put into the competition. (Kubrick refuses even to *send* his new film.)

I used to ask myself, what do they know that we don't? Then I began to serve on film festival juries, and found out.

© *Conundrum Ltd. 1988*

After Love

"When this is all over . . .", we said,
and laughed and made that bed;
made other things seem trivial
and unenduring, lying there joking and seeming equal.

Yet so often now we are like strangers
guilty of acts committed in darkness.
Preferring not to talk we notice
how uneven the body is
in sleep and lie and listen to thoughts
which have no hope of finding voice,
even in these moments
after love, after everything is done, less tense.

Outside the sky is vacant, lost,
at random. As we turn and shift to rest
with slow and separate movements
the wind bleats at our door, and sounds human.

Anthony Wilson

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nationalism, as Disease & Cure

The Albanians of Yugoslavia—By ANTON LOGORECI

Kosovo may well be the key to Yugoslavia's mortal crisis. In May 1986, Yugoslavia's Minister of the Interior said that 8,000 Yugoslav citizens of Albanian origin from that province, in the Republic of Serbia, had been jailed for various political offences between March 1981 and May 1986.[1] These repressive measures, which continued throughout 1986 and 1987, were a sequel to the riots that broke out in Kosovo in the spring of 1981, sparked by a demonstration organised on March 11 by university students in the provincial capital Prishtina; they were complaining about inadequate grants, poor living conditions, and shortage of textbooks. Taken aback and angered by this public protest, the local police tried to disperse the students with truncheons and tear-gas. This had the effect not only of widening the scope and scale of the demonstrations but also of unleashing the pent-up political, economic and social frustrations of many years. New demonstrations, involving workers as well as several thousand students, took place on 25-26 March and at the beginning of April. The protest movement spread to other parts of the province.

The students' original grievances soon gave way to demands concerning the status and the welfare of all the inhabitants. Apart from an improvement in economic conditions, the demonstrators asked for more freedom of expression, greater equality with other national groups, the release of political prisoners—and, more significantly, that Kosovo should be detached from Serbia and welcomed into the Yugoslav Federation as one of the Republics.

The authorities decided to meet this forceful display of popular discontent not with political discussion but with force. A "state of emergency" was immediately imposed on the province. Large police contingents and Army units were rushed from other parts of Yugoslavia to reinforce the local police. There were casualties, though the Yugoslav official figures (9 demonstrators and 2 policemen killed; 257 people injured) have been contested by some Western correspondents working in the country at that time.

The riots—the most serious in the post-War history of Yugoslavia—were quickly followed by arrests, purges, and dismissals on a massive scale. They involved the Communist Party, the local administration, the news media, the educational establishment. Then came a long series of political trials which have, at intervals, continued ever since. Some of the main charges levelled against the defendants included the following: "taking part in demonstrations; belonging to illegal organisations; conducting hostile propaganda in the name of nationalism and irredentism by means of the written and the spoken word."

Perhaps "irredentism"—the alleged ambition of the defendants to bring about a union between Kosovo and Albania across the border—was the most obscure as well as the most serious charge. Some local Albanian critics of the régime had demanded on many occasions that Kosovo, with a population of over 1.5 million, should become "one of the Republics of the Federation", and the authorities assumed that republican status was merely a stepping-stone to the ultimate goal of complete secession. Because of this somewhat arbitrary extrapolation, terms such as "irredentism" and "irredentists" are used quite indiscriminately in official Yugoslav propaganda, and are applied to many Yugoslav citizens of Albanian extraction no matter what they complain or protest about.

THE TRIAL AND IMPRISONMENT of so many young people living in a small community tended to increase the already existing bitterness and discontent: to stimulate the spirit of rebellion rather than stifle it. Persistent reports about sabotage, bomb explosions, desecration of Serbian graves, and nationalist propaganda in the form of graffiti and leaflets indicated that the protest movement had gone underground.

Here is a manifestation of the problem of modern nationalism in one of its most acute, explosive, and intractable forms. To begin to understand why such a sharp conflict has arisen in a Communist multi-national state like Yugoslavia, one needs to examine the way in which its government handled the national question over the years, as well as some of the underlying social and ideological issues.

[1] *Rilindja*, 12 May 1986.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is widely agreed that Karl Marx did not devote much attention or thought to the problem of nationalism. He has been criticised, for instance, for being contemptuous of the Czechs, the Croats, and the Serbs who turned against their Austrian and Hungarian rulers during the 1848 revolution. Marx was not able to provide guidance on the matter to his many followers in the 20th century or to anticipate the powerful growth of modern nationalism, particularly in its more extreme and destructive forms. But he was by no means unaware of nationalism as such. He merely thought that it would disappear, together with capitalism—just as many of his liberal contemporaries believed it would, though for quite different reasons.

But if Marx failed to grasp the real significance of 19th-century nationalism, a number of 20th-century British historians and political and social writers have shown a far greater lack of understanding of the phenomenon, although they lived and worked in a century strewn with its numerous incarnations.

"The idea of nationality as a basis of independent statehood is obsolete", wrote G. D. H. Cole, the social historian, in 1941. He went on:

> "In the case of the great states surrounded by smaller neighbours, it is inevitable, if state sovereignty is to remain the basis of political relationships, that the great states should seek to engulf their neighbours and the small states be kept alive, if at all, when they are in the position of buffers between the great."[2]

In this, Cole not only forecast fairly accurately the subsequent domination of the countries of Eastern and Central Europe by the Soviet Union, but prescribed it as the best possible solution. Writing at the end of World War II, Edward Hallett Carr argued that small nation states could "survive only as an anomaly and an anachronism in a world which has moved to the other forms of organisation". Discussing the prospects of a new international order, he maintained that:

> ". . . what has to be challenged and rejected is the claim of nationalism to make the nation the sole rightful sovereign repository of political power and the ultimate constituent unit of world organisation."[3]

Similar views were expressed a few years later by a teacher of philosophy, Professor John Macmurray:

> "Under Hitler's leadership, Germany carried nationalism, with its principle of self-determination, to its logical conclusion. By doing so, Germany has proved the bankruptcy of nationalism, and has set us the task of overcoming and transcending it. From now onwards nationalism and freedom are incompatible. . . . In principle, modern nationalism is atavistic; it is a relapse into primitive tribalism; an attempt to reinstate the original organic unity of primitive society as an ideal for civilisation."[4]

These writers have in common two strands of thought and feeling: an arrogant, patronising, big-power attitude towards the smaller nations of Europe; and a very nebulous utopian or revolutionary notion of some future world political organisation. What they signally failed to grasp is the plain fact that, whether we approve of it or not, Nationalism is a surging phenomenon of our time, equally capable of promoting true human identity and freedom or destroying them. In the hands of individuals or groups intoxicated with their own power it can be a sharp instrument for manipulating and controlling other human beings. For the victims of such domination it can serve as a vehicle of escape from the position of second-class citizenship or worse. In the words of Hugh Seton-Watson:

> "Nationalism, it seems to me, is a phenomenon of a certain stage in human history. It is neither good nor bad. It is like a coin on one side of which appear the venerable features of Garibaldi, on the other the obscene figure of the Commandant of Auschwitz."[5]

Faced with such a protean phenomenon, the only possible course is to explore some of its sources and the various consequences of its manifestations, both good and evil.

One of the first theoretical attempts to deal with the problem of nationalism in a large multi-national state was made before the First World War by the Austrian Marxists, Otto Bauer and Karl Renner. Their aim was to preserve the unity of the Habsburg Empire by transforming it into a socialist state in which political and economic power lay in the hands of a central government. National groups would enjoy linguistic and cultural freedom, but not territorial independence. When it came to the crunch, this elaborate scheme foundered because the various nationalists of Austria-Hungary believed that no real cultural development was possible without effective political power.

The issue was taken up by the Russian Marxists, who were faced with the great complexities of Russia's own multi-national empire. In their eagerness to win over to their revolutionary cause the oppressed peoples of Russia, Lenin and Stalin were, before 1917, very generous with promises: they recognised the right to complete self-determination, even of secession. But, once the Bolsheviks had seized power, it soon became clear that such promises had been purely tactical and temporary. The right to secede, for instance, was abandoned, and a Unitary rather than a Federal state was favoured on the grounds that the latter tended to weaken economic and other links.[6]

After 1917, the issue of Nationalism was subordinated to the cause of Communist revolution both at home and abroad; it was made to serve national interests as determined by the Soviet government in Moscow. The Communist International (or Comintern), which was set up in 1919, became an important instrument of Soviet foreign policy until 1943, when it

---

[2] G. D. H. Cole, *Europe, Russia, and the Future* (1941), quoted in Alfred Cobban, *The Nation State and National Self-Determination* (1969), p. 19.

[3] E. H. Carr, *Nationalism and After* (1945), pp. 37-39.

[4] John Macmurray, *Conditions of Freedom* (1950), p. 61.

[5] H. R. Seton-Watson, *Nationalism, Old and New* (1965), p. 21.

[6] Rudolf Schlesinger, *Federalism in Central and Eastern Europe* (1945), p. 326.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was dissolved. Communist leaders from many parts of the world who resided in Moscow during this period had to adjust as best they could to the numerous sudden shifts in Soviet domestic and foreign policies. Many of them lost their lives, either for opposing such changes or for failing to adjust to them swiftly enough.

AMONG THOSE WHO had to make such difficult choices were the Yugoslav Communists in Moscow, who hoped to be in a position to tackle the problems of their multi-national country, founded in 1918 as one of the successor states of the Habsburg Empire. These problems were debated continuously by the various factions of the Communist Party against two sharply different backgrounds: the current political situation in Yugoslavia (then dominated by the Serbs, who were at loggerheads with other national communities); and the constantly shifting policies of the Soviet government. After several years strewn with bitter wrangles and purges, the Croat Josip Broz Tito finally emerged in 1937 as Party Leader and the Comintern's trusted man.

Tito and his comrades learnt a number of important lessons from their close association with the Comintern. One was that Nationalism was not an end in itself (as many "bourgeois nationalists" had believed), but only a means of achieving the final goal of Communist revolution. Therefore its handling was to be subordinated, at any given moment, to the need to gain power and then hold on to it. Another lesson was the need to adopt the Soviet "federal system", instead of the unitary state dominated by Serbia which existed in Yugoslavia between the two Wars. This would grant the various national groups some of the linguistic and cultural freedoms denied to them under Serbian rule. In Moscow's tough school of raw power-politics, directed by Stalin, Tito and his associates also learnt the essential techniques for sheer survival, as individuals and as members of small national groups, by pitting their nationalism against the imperialist ambitions and designs of their powerful protector.

THE WHOLE STRUCTURE of the Yugoslav state lay in ruins after the German attack in April 1941. The Communist Party faced four years of bitter partisan warfare against the occupying armies, interspersed with many grim interludes of civil war. Several deep nationalist fissures soon appeared among the remains of the old political framework. For instance, Croatia became an independent state under German protection; Macedonia was annexed by Bulgaria; Kosovo and parts of Macedonia, largely inhabited by Albanians, were incorporated in Albania, which was then under Italian rule.

Broadly speaking, the other main features of the wartime situation were the outright hostility between Serbs and Croats, often manifested in massacre and counter-massacre, and the immense relief felt by the national minorities (Macedonians, Albanians, Hungarians) at having escaped the clutches of a repressive state which had denied them their identity. It is among these groups that the occupying powers were able to enlist willing collaborators. One enormous task which the Communist resistance movement set itself was to contain these anarchic forces by attempting to harness them first to the cause of fighting the Enemy, then to the cause of Revolution.

In pursuit of this policy, the leadership began discussing plans about the country's post-War political organisation. Tito said (in an article published in December 1942) that his movement would recognise the "basic principle of self-determination" and "secession", though this would be denied to groups which had "collaborated with the enemy". (This was a loophole for excluding Croat, Albanian, Hungarian, and other collaborators.)

A year later, the political wing of the partisan movement (the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation) announced that the new state would be organised along Federal lines. But, under very difficult wartime conditions, the Yugoslav Communists were in a real quandary whenever they discussed the future. They were determined to create a Federal state of some kind, controlled by the Party, out of the *whole* of pre-War Yugoslavia, not some truncated entity. Yet they knew there were powerful separatist tendencies in Croatia, Macedonia, and Kosovo, where people feared that the iniquities of the inter-War period would persist under Communist or any other rule. Tito and his colleagues hoped that such sceptics could be won over by the promise of national and cultural rights. To them self-determination was not separatism, but a tactical device for promoting their revolutionary cause.

THE PARTITION OF YUGOSLAVIA meant, among other things, that the highly inflamed national issue began causing difficulties for the Communist Party's relations with Communist organisations in Macedonia, Hungary, and Albania. This was particularly true of Albania, which had come under strong Yugoslav influence during the War. A serious bone of contention between Albania and Yugoslavia was the future of Kosovo, which, paradoxically, was then experiencing its first spell of national and cultural freedom—first under Italian, then under German occupation. In 1943, the Albanian Communist resistance movement stated that at the end of the War the inhabitants of Kosovo should be allowed to decide whether they wished to remain in Albania or rejoin Yugoslavia. However, this claim was dropped after it was severely criticised by the Yugoslavs.

Disagreement over such a vital issue stemmed partly from the very different views of the two Parties on "the role of nationalism in the revolutionary struggle". While Tito had learned the hard way in Moscow how best to make nationalism serve the cause of Communist power and control, the Albanian Communists, lacking any such experience, were inclined to take at its face-value Comintern propaganda about "national self-determination". The disagreement was to leave deep, lasting scars not only on the political evolution of Kosovo but also on the future relations between the two Parties and countries.

The old hostility between Serbs and Croats, and between Serbs and Macedonians, aggravated by civil war, was one of the most difficult problems facing the Communist leaders at

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the end of the War and during the early post-War years. Of almost equal gravity was the Kosovo issue, with its highly explosive ingredients: the presence of the Albanians (the largest non-Slav group in Yugoslavia), who were in permanent conflict with the Serbs (the country's largest and most powerful group). Unlike the Serbs, the Croats and the rest, the Albanians were opposed to the Communist partisans on two separate counts: because the partisans wanted to reimpose Serbian—hence foreign—rule on the province; and because they planned to set up by force a political régime which many of the inhabitants disliked. Between the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, both Serbian and Communist rule were established by extreme military measures, accompanied by a good deal of bloodshed.[7] These events were to play an important part in shaping the subsequent attitudes of the Albanian population of Yugoslavia and of the Tirana government towards the Yugoslav authorities.

The Communist régime introduced in 1945 a federal form of government, closely modelled on the Soviet system, made up of six Republics or "nation-states" (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia), and two "autonomous provinces" (Kosovo, Vojvodina). The official classification of the country's fifteen ethnic communities was in itself of some political significance. The six main Slav communities were given the place of honour: they were designated "nations", in contrast to the other nine communities, which were called "nationalities"—another term for "national minorities". Of the latter, the Albanians and the Hungarians, the country's largest non-Slav groups, were placed under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Republic. These arrangements were promulgated in the Constitution of 1946.

A further complication was introduced into this intricate political mosaic when it was decided to distribute the Albanian population among three republics—Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro—with Serbia receiving the majority in the province of Kosovo. Not surprisingly, this partition was seen as a form of punishment for Albanian opposition to Serbian and Communist rule, as well as an insurance against such opposition being repeated.

Stalin's decision to expel Tito's régime from the Soviet bloc in June 1948 marked a watershed in Yugoslavia's post-War history. Having come to power without Russian aid, the Yugoslav leader refused to submit to Soviet domination as other Communist leaders of Eastern Europe had done. He was able to safeguard Yugoslavia's independence by wielding the powerful shield of nationalism on behalf of possibly the majority of his countrymen. It would not have been unreasonable to expect the Albanian Communist leaders to support Yugoslavia, their close ally, in its predicament. But in point of fact they did the very opposite. They broke away from their next-door neighbour and became enthusiastic supporters of Stalin's campaign against Tito. By a bizarre coincidence, their behaviour, too, was chiefly motivated by a passionate desire for national independence. But in the Albanian case it was independence from Belgrade, not from Moscow.

What really caused this breach, apart from the Kosovo issue, was a determined Yugoslav attempt to bring about a quick political union between the two countries—it was hoped this would somehow sweep away the old Serbian-Albanian antagonism. Several measures were rapidly introduced to this end. The "economic development plans" of the two countries were coordinated; a "customs union" was agreed; Yugoslav-Albanian joint-stock companies were set up to develop Albania's mineral resources; and Yugoslav experts were given the task of implementing these decisions. In addition, a Yugoslav Air Force squadron was sent to Albania. Plans to move two Army divisions there were thwarted only by the final break between Moscow and Belgrade.

Stalin, who was well aware of Tito's ambitions and plans regarding Albania, appeared at first to encourage them. Early in 1948 he urged a Yugoslav delegation to Moscow that their country should "swallow" its small neighbour as soon as possible. Yet, shortly after, he criticised Tito for sending troops to Albania without consulting him.[8]

The plans for political union were opposed with impotent anger by most of the Albanian leaders. As ardent nationalists, they were unwilling to exchange one kind of foreign rule for another so soon after coming to power. Stalin may have prevented the annexation of their country by Yugoslavia in 1948, but the Communist rulers of both countries, who had undertaken to work out a fresh, constructive approach to the problem of nationalism, in fact, far from doing so, had made matters worse. By their policies and behaviour they not only destroyed any chance of establishing normal stable relations with each other for many years to come. They also set in motion powerful reverberations of mutual suspicion and hostility which, in one way or another, still affect the political and social attitudes of many national communities of the Yugoslav federation.

Kosovo—and other areas of Yugoslavia inhabited by Albanians—became the main battleground in which the two former allies clashed after 1948.

Apart from supporting Moscow's anti-Yugoslav propaganda campaign, the Albanian régime concentrated its main efforts on stirring up disaffection and rebellion among the Albanians living across the border. With equal vigour, the Yugoslav side responded in kind. But such open hostility was not confined to propaganda: there were also serious frontier incidents caused by incursions of Yugoslav and Albanian armed bands. The real victims of these bitter exchanges were inescapably the Albanian inhabitants of Kosovo and the adjacent areas. The Yugoslav government's earlier suspicions about these people increased, and so did their persecution. The true scale of the persecution was only revealed by the authorities after the dismissal of Alexander Ranković, the Yugoslav Minister of the Interior (and Chief of the Secret

[7] Paul Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question* (1968), pp. 104-105.

[8] Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (1962), pp. 130, 162.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Police), in the summer of 1966. It was then admitted that since the end of the War the Albanians had felt the full force of the Secret Police's brutal methods.[9]

Ranković's dismissal had important political repercussions. Perhaps its most lasting effect was to undermine the Serbian supremacy over the Federation which he had embodied in his role as Serbia's most powerful leader between 1945 and 1966. His departure released pent-up anti-Serbian feelings among other national groups, and set in motion political and constitutional reforms which gradually enhanced the powers of the republics for independent action.

As THE GROUP which had suffered most under Serbian rule, the Albanians were among the earliest to demand such changes. In the street demonstrations which they staged in November 1968—the forerunner of a long series, culminating in the 1981 riots—the request to have Kosovo recognised as a separate republic was first voiced, on the grounds that the province could not enjoy real equality and freedom as a mere appendage to Serbia. Although the request was rejected, the authorities did make several important concessions to Albanian opinion. A university was set up in the provincial capital; and the local government was allowed to have wide educational and cultural exchanges with Albania, a measure which was to play a crucial role in stimulating national awareness in Kosovo. The province was also given greater autonomy, and the right to establish direct links with the Federal authorities in Belgrade. Despite these significant improvements, the rejection of republican status continued to rankle for many years. It spread more frustration and discontent, and stoked the fires of rebellion.

The next major crisis of a nationalist character occurred in Croatia in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was far more serious than the earlier crisis, involving as it did the country's two largest communities—Croats and Serbs, with their long history of antagonism.

After the downfall of the hard-line Serbian leader, Croat grievances became sharper and more outspoken. There was a powerful popular movement in favour of greater independence from the Federal government in political, economic, and cultural affairs. Local party and government leaders were buoyed up by this groundswell of nationalist sentiments, which they did their best to encourage and articulate. But all this was regarded as a serious challenge to the authority of the central government. President Tito, in his capacity as defender of that authority, decided to take swift action. In December 1971 the, Croat Republic's leaders were forced to resign, and there were large-scale dismissals in many branches of Croatia's administration. In addition, hundreds of people, many of them students, were sent to prison for taking part in nationalist demonstrations.[10]

The following year Tito carried out a parallel purge of the Serbian Communist Party leaders, though on quite different grounds. They were accused of espousing and encouraging, not "nationalist", but "liberal and pluralist" tendencies. Their removal from office became part of a general drive for tighter ideological and political control from the centre. As a result of the purges, the country lost several able and independent-minded politicians. They were replaced by worthy beneficiaries of the Communist spoils-system known as *nomenklatura*, which places a much higher premium on conformity and loyalty to the Party than on ability and independent thought.

Somewhat paradoxically, the campaign for stricter ideological and political control was accompanied by important new concessions to nationalist opinion and pressure. A number of constitutional amendments passed in June 1971 enabled the Republics as well as the autonomous provinces of Serbia (Kosovo and Vojvodina) to participate directly in the work of the federal government, whose functions were confined to defence, state security, and foreign policy. These amendments were incorporated in the Constitution of 1974, in which the six Republics assumed full control over administration, economy, and foreign trade. The economy of the country was thus broken up into separate Republican units. All this was in effect a clear victory for the nationalism of the six principal ethnic groups at the expense of higher loyalty to the Federation. Although the Constitution still referred to a "Federal system", the country was thereafter held together by a framework which was more like a loose confederation than a federation in the proper sense of the term.

TITO, UNTIL HIS DEATH in May 1980, had been involved for more than 40 years with the highly complex problems of the multi-national state over which he ruled. At the height of his career, he had come to personify the Federal principle itself. He had done so by putting his undoubted political skill, flair, and prestige at the service of healing differences between volatile national factions. He was adept at knocking inflamed heads together and at patching up compromises when these appeared beyond anyone else's reach. But when performing these very useful functions, Tito was sometimes liable to spread the illusion that "the art of reconciling conflicting national interests" was inherent in the Yugoslav political system; he claimed on many occasions that his régime had managed to solve the country's national problems once and for all. The last time he made such a claim was in October 1978 (two-and-a-half years before the Kosovo explosion), when he said:

> "The recognition of the rights of national minorities is a question of principle. We have resolved it in our country; we respect all the nationalities which live in our country; they enjoy full rights."[11]

This misconceived notion, spread relentlessly by official propaganda over the years, pervades Yugoslav society to such a

---

[9] Paul Shoup, *Communism and the Yugoslav National Question*, p. 217.

[10] François Fejtö, *A History of the People's Democracies* (1974), pp. 505-511; Victor Meier, "Yugoslavia's National Question", *Problems of Communism*, March-April 1983, pp. 47-60.

[11] S. Stanković, "Tito and the Problem of National Minorities" (Radio Free Europe Background Report, 10 October 1978).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

degree that many party and government officials, judges, policemen, journalists, and others have tended to believe that the hackneyed official slogan "Brotherhood and Unity" was not some distant goal worth striving for, but a goal that had already been achieved. What this illusion had done was to discourage any hard political thinking about the problems of a multi-national society, relying instead on the use of force to smother the citizens' free expression of genuine grievances.

This policy has been especially in evidence during the political crisis caused by the 1981 riots. With Tito's "healing powers" no longer available to them, the Yugoslav leaders—many of them beneficiaries of the purges of the early 1970s—made no attempt to start discussions with the protestors but embarked on a long series of political trials at which many young people were given prison sentences ranging from a few months to fifteen years.

The Serbian government was able to pursue such a policy within its borders, despite some criticism from one or two other Republics, by virtue of the powers for independent action bestowed on all Republican governments by the 1974 Constitution. This policy professed to achieve nothing less than the complete eradication of nationalism. Karl Kraus, the Austrian satirical writer, once remarked that "Psychoanalysis is the disease for which it claims to be the cure. . . ." In the same way, Serbian nationalism claims to be the cure for, among other nationalisms, that of the Albanians living in Yugoslavia.

THE SERBIAN AUTHORITIES found themselves in such a fix largely because of their failure to take into account the sea-change that had occurred during the past twenty years or so in the general political outlook of the Albanian community. The pre-War and the immediate post-War members of this group—poor, uneducated, and very patient—lived in fear and sullen resignation under Serbian rule. They felt that, apart from the occasional spasm of resistance to political oppression, there was little they could do to improve their wretched lot. The post-War generations, on the other hand, are not only better educated and better informed than their parents and grandparents; they are far more keenly aware of their national identity and human rights in general, as well as of the need to assert and defend them. They are motivated by anger and a spirit of rebellion rather than by fear and hopeless resignation. Consequently, repressive measures tended to fuel rather than dampen their will to resist.

Disregarding these radical changes, the Serbian government was inclined to revert to more or less those policies that the Police-Chief, Alexander Ranković had pursued with such dire consequences until 1966.

Poor economic and living conditions have long been a major source of discontent among the 1.7 million Albanians of Yugoslavia. The great majority live in Kosovo—the country's poorest and most backward area—where they constitute 77.5% of the population. Unemployment in the province has risen steadily over the years, reaching 54.5% in October 1986, when the national average was 16.7%. Average personal income is the lowest in the country. The grim human reality behind these figures becomes somewhat clearer when one notes that Yugoslavia's inflation rose from 80% to over 167% between October 1985 and December 1987. Another unhelpful factor in the situation is the Albanian birth-rate, which at 32 per 1,000 is the highest in Europe—nearly three times Yugoslavia's figure.[12]

THE NATIONALIST self-assertion of the Albanians called forth a sharp Serbian reaction which has been reinforced by their angry response to the political trials of recent years. A new source of friction between the two communities came with the migration of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo. Between 1961 and 1981 the number of Serbian and Montenegrin inhabitants had dropped from just over 27% to nearly 15%; since that time, the stream of Slav migrants from the province has flowed steadily, although no reliable figures are available.

What is beyond any doubt is that Slav migration from Kosovo has become a burning political issue. This was particularly evident during 1986 when grievances were aired in several demonstrations and meetings which had a clear undertone of menace. In January 1986, for instance, a group of Serbs told the Federal Parliament in Belgrade that the Albanians were pursuing "a policy of genocide" towards the Slav population of the province. In November, another group of Serbs and Montenegrins met Party and government officials in the capital and informed them that they "would fight for justice even if it meant bloodshed". Public demonstrations and protests are usually not permitted; what is significant about these particular ones is that not only were they permitted, but they were given wide publicity.

The Serbs are clearly very worried that they are losing Kosovo—the heartland of their medieval history—to the prolific and recalcitrant Albanians. What also worries them is the fact that out of a total of just over eight million Serbs, more than three million live outside the borders of Serbia proper, most of them in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Being under the jurisdiction of other, fairly independent, republics, they remain outside the protection and influence of the Serbian government.[13]

Paul Shoup (the American historian who has made a close study of Yugoslavia's nationality problems) has pointed out that, apart from seeking constitutional solutions for reasons of political expediency, Yugoslav governments had failed to tackle the underlying national outlooks and emotions of the different national groups:

> "The true state of relations among the nationalities was never frankly discussed, and little effort was made to in-

[12] S. Stanković, "Yugoslavia's Census—Final Results" (RFE Background Report, 10 March 1982); M. Andrejevich, "Yugoslav Domestic Situation" (RFE Background Report, 15 December 1986); *Tanjug*, 21 January 1988.

[13] M. Andrejevich, "Yugoslav Domestic Situation"; S. Stanković, "Yugoslavia's Census . . .".

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

form either the Serbs or the Albanians of the legitimate interests and concerns of the other community. In brief, no effort was made to allow reasonable discussion to replace emotion, or for all concerned to adjust their demands and expectations to the existing situation."[14]

No encouragement or prodding came from the international community, Western governments in particular, to Yugoslav governments to improve their record of human rights, and thereby help to ease domestic political tensions. Yugoslavia is one of the signatories of the 1975 Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe—yet in none of the follow-up meetings held in Madrid and elsewhere has its treatment of political dissidents ever been raised or discussed.

If nothing is done to resolve or alleviate the Serbian-Albanian conflict, the two communities will continue inexorably to be driven apart. The tight coils of mutual hatred, anger, alienation and fear will spread greater nationalist turmoil, political mayhem, and instability in the country as a whole, and perhaps beyond its borders.

[14] Arshi Pipa and Sami Repishti (eds), *Studies on Kosovo* (1984), p. 237.

AUTHORS

Richard Stern is Professor of English at the University of Chicago. His novels include *Natural Shocks* (1978) which won the first Carl Sandburg Award in fiction and *Golk* (University of Chicago Press, 1987). "In Return" will be published in his *Collected Short Stories 1949-88* by Grove Press (New York) in October.

Dan Pinck was an administrator at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a researcher at Harvard University, and is a consultant to architects. He contributed another memoir "Paging Mr Ross" in the May 1987 ENCOUNTER, an account of his days at *The New Yorker* under editor Harold Ross.

Kevin Crossley-Holland's collections of poetry include *Waterslain and Other Poems* published by Hutchinson (1986), who will bring out his latest collection, *The Painting Room*, in August.

J. P. Stern, Professor of German, University of London from 1972-1986, is the author of numerous publications, including *On Realism* (Routledge, 1973), *Hitler* (Harvester Press, 1975), and two studies of Nietzsche (Fontana Modern Masters, 1977, n.e. 1985; Cambridge University Press, 1979); he is editor of *Paths and Labyrinths: a Kafka Symposium* (1985) and *London German Studies II* and *III* (1984, 1986). A shorter version of this article was published in *The New Republic* (March 1987).

Jean-François Revel, the French philosopher and critic, writes a regular column for *Le Point* in Paris. His most recently translated work, *How Democracies Perish*, was published in 1985 by Weidenfeld (London) and Doubleday (New York).

Roy Kerridge is the author of *Druid Madonna* (1983); his non-fiction work about West Indians in England, *Real Wicked Guy*, was followed by *Bizarre Britain: A Calendar of Eccentricity* (1983, 1985), a volume of autobiography, *Lone Conformist* (1984), and *The People of Britain* (Robert Hale, 1987). His latest book, *In the Deep South*, will be published by Michael Joseph next year.

Robert Rhodes James, Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, has been Conservative MP for Cambridge since 1976. He is the author of many books, including *Churchill: a study in failure, 1900-1939* (1970), *The British Revolution 1880-1939* (Vol. I, 1976, Vol. II, 1977), and biographies of *Lord Randolph Churchill* (Hamish Hamilton, 1986), and *Anthony Eden* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986).

Colin Style is a freelance writer, who, born and brought up in Zimbabwe, now lives in Devon. He has co-edited (with his wife) *The Mambo Book of Zimbabwean Verse* (Mambo Press, 1986), and has published two collections of poetry: *Musical Saw* (Zimbabwe, 1981), and *Baobab Street* (Johannesburg, 1977), which won the Ingrid Jonker prize for the best first collection of poems in English published in Southern Africa.

Michael Sutton works as an economist in London and Brussels and specialises in European affairs. He covers France for The Economist Intelligence Unit and is the author of *Nationalism, Positivism and Catholicism: the Politics of Charles Maurras and French Catholics* (Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Park Honan was born in New York and is of English, Irish and German extraction. He is Professor of English and American Literature at the University of Leeds. With William Irvine, he wrote *The Book, the Ring, and the Poet* (Bodley Head, 1975). His other books include *Browning's Characters* (Yale, 1961), *Matthew Arnold: A Life* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981), and *Jane Austen: Her Life* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987).

Anton Logoreci was a scriptwriter and commentator on East European affairs in the BBC External Services from 1967-1974. He is the author of *The Albanians: Europe's Forgotten Survivors* (Gollancz, 1977; Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1978).

Michael Graubart has been Director of Music at Morley College since 1969 (where he is also Head of Science). His numerous musical activities include conducting, composing, and occasionally writing on music. He has edited works by Dufay, Josquin des Prez, Monteverdi and Pergolesi, and has performed these and much other baroque and earlier music. He writes: "I have thus—while not being an early music specialist—an interest in the aesthetics of 'authentic' instruments and performance styles."

David Anstis is an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects; his M. Arch. thesis surveyed modern British architecture from 1945-56. In 1964 he was a RIBA Silver Medal Essayist. Now in private practice, he was until 1985 Principal Lecturer in Architecture at Portsmouth Polytechnic. His articles and reviews have appeared in the *Architects Association Quarterly, Contact* (Journal of Urban & Environmental Affairs, University of Waterloo, Canada), and the *Royal Society of Arts Journal.*

Edward Pearce is a columnist for *The Sunday Times*, and author of two volumes of sketches of Parliamentary personalities, *The Senate of Lilliput* and *Hummingbirds and Hyenas* (Faber, 1983, 1985). His latest book, *Looking Down on Mrs Thatcher*—published in 1987 by Hamish Hamilton—includes several of his ENCOUNTER articles.

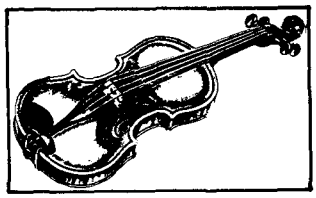
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MUSIC

A Reply to Anne-Sophie Mutter

Playing on *What* Stradivarius?

By Michael Graubart



THERE ARE few unexpected revelations, insights or illuminations in the interview with the young violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter (ENCOUNTER, May). But when an outstanding performer of today talks about authenticity in relation to the masterpieces of the past, it behoves us to listen—and perhaps to challenge his or her assumptions.

The question is not a simple one, nor the answer a foregone conclusion. Why *should* we make a piece sound as nearly like it did in its composer's time as we can? Ultimately it is a question for the listener. Does he or she listen to music for immediate pleasure or in order to establish a relation with and understanding of the mind and the surrounding world of its creator? If the former, then there is nothing wrong with Bach on the piano or Mozart with modern strings and wind —or, for that matter, electric guitars.

But where does one stop? Conductors regularly "touch up" Beethoven's orchestration—poor man . . . he was deaf, after all. Mahler radically re-orchestrated Schumann; it sounds "better" that way. 19th-century editors changed the harmonies—"crude" by their textbook standards—in Haydn's masses in order to make the tunes more acceptable. No less an editor than Brahms, working on the first collected edition of Schubert, toned down a harsh and structurally crucial dissonance in the *Unfinished Symphony*, establishing the standard version still usually played today. It fits the image of Schubert, the innocuous lyricist, better. But what if we get bored with the 29 bars of reiterated tonic chord at the end of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony? Is it fundamentally so different to cut them? And suppose we find the cheerful D-major coda to the finale of Mozart's D-minor piano concerto frivolous—play it in D-minor? Or do we find the theme of Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* too square and predictable? Change a few notes? Even this is not as absurd as it sounds. Vivaldi would have been profoundly disappointed if a soloist had played one of his slow movements as written and not used it as a skeleton for elaborate, improvised decorations, and melodic transformations.

If the listener chooses the other alternative, and tries to re-enter the aural world of the composer, things are still not easy. We may study the manuscript scores and the contemporary treatises on performance-practice, restore the old instruments, even perform in halls the right size and shape. The one feature of the transaction that we cannot make authentic is the listener's ears. Or rather, the stored-up memories and associations: the seven-note harpsichord crash that begins Bach's *Italian Concerto* must have made his first listeners jump out of their seats; to us, conditioned by pneumatic drills, Concorde, 100-piece orchestras, it is a pleasing tinkle.

Personally, I think the effort to come ever closer to the composer's sound-world *is* worthwhile. It initiates a cyclic educative process whereby the listener does begin to build up the appropriate set of expectations, and hence responses, instead of the anachronistic ones. But whatever stance we decide to adopt, let us strive to be consistent—and honest.

Thirty years ago—even, perhaps, ten years ago—one had to choose between impeccable "modern" performances of Baroque music and scratchy, unreliable, out-of-tune "authentic" ones. Few performers (certainly not enough of them to form orchestras of quality) could earn a living entirely by playing early music on period instruments. They had to switch between "old" and "new" from day to day, and could not develop real expertise on the old. That is no longer true, and when Miss Mutter talks about Harnoncourt (and, by implication, Pinnock and Hogwood and Norrington and Brüggen and Kuijken, and many other directors of absolutely first-class Baroque ensembles and orchestras) in terms of "searching for just how awful it used to sound", she is not in fact criticising playing standards, but making a subjective declaration of her own position along the "authentic-modern" axis. She is entitled to prefer Bach on the piano but is perhaps unwise to imply that the harpsichordist plays less well than the pianist.

THE CONDUCTOR, by the way, to whom Nathan Milstein offered his violin when they could not agree about the interpretation of a concerto, would probably have been unwise to risk taking up the challenge. Few conductors, whatever their skills may once have been, remain as well in practice as world-famous soloists. But I did once watch such a gauntlet being thrown down to a conductor—and being picked up with spectacular success.

This was during one of the recording sessions for Verdi's *Otello*, conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. The principal cellist of the Philharmonia Orchestra just could not play the famous solo to the conductor's satisfaction, and finally Barbirolli exclaimed, "If only I had a cello, I'd show you!" Immediately, the cellist handed up his instrument. Barbirolli took it, knelt down on one knee on the rostrum, played the recalcitrant phrase exquisitely and, to applause from the whole orchestra, silently handed the instrument back to its owner—who then played the melody just as Barbirolli wanted it.

Barbirolli had, of course, been a cellist, though he could not have played for decades before this incident. But the anecdote illustrates an important point. Barbirolli had been in close contact with another cellist-conductor: Toscanini. And Toscanini had worked with Verdi himself.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Performing traditions handed on through unbroken chains of great musicians have, it is true, to be handled with critical caution: great performers' idiosyncracies may at times be stronger than their long-term memories. But they are of the utmost importance, none the less, especially where there are neither original gramophone recordings nor (as there are in one or two cases for Haydn and Mozart) contemporary barrel-organs or mechanical clocks. Even when recordings exist, their value is limited by the philosophical problem of exemplification, whereas performing traditions will often be based on an amalgamation of many remembered performances, rehearsals, and even discussions.

WHICH BRINGS ME to Miss Mutter's Stradivarius and all the past music and players' idiosyncracies that she feels it has absorbed. I do not wish to dispute that she can tell when someone else has been playing on it. But what it has primarily absorbed over the years is a succession of rebuilds that makes it not much more like it was in 1710 than a modern Steinway concert-grand is like the fortepiano on which Mozart played.

Today's surviving early violins (if they have not lain undisturbed in museums or been restored to their original state) have had their necks and finger-boards lengthened to make it easier to play in high positions. Their bridges are more arched. They are strung with steel strings or, on the lower ones, strings wound along their whole length with fine wire, instead of plain cat-gut. To bring these heavier and longer strings up to pitch (and a higher pitch at that), they are put under vastly greater tension—which not only yields a more powerful tone, but makes the strings react differently to various bow-strokes and makes the bow bounce differently. And, most radically, to support this greater tension, the internal structure of the violin has had to be greatly strengthened—which changes and damps down the vibrations of its body. The bow, too, is different. By Mozart's day it had begun to change; but in 1710 bows were lighter, and curved in reverse (making them really look like a huntsman's bow) and the horse-hair was under less tension, again altering not just the tone but the kinds of bowing and articulation that were possible and effective.

Why, then, is Miss Mutter so keen on *Ur*-texts? It is, of course, a praiseworthy endeavour at least to be aware of the starting-point from which alterations are made, whether by an editor or by a modern performer. But does she not imply that she *plays* something close to what the composer intended, even though she does so on a thoroughly modernised violin, with a modernised orchestra, making an "improved" modern sound that she infinitely prefers to the original? Why her purism about bowings, when bowings that are effective with a modern violin and bow *do not work* on an early one, and the composer was conditioned in what he notated by what *worked* on the instrument of his own day?

One might also wish to ask Miss Mutter whether she can more readily than the various scholars and editors, define what an *Ur*-text actually *is* when, as in the case of many works of Beethoven's, she is faced with an autograph, a printer's proof of the first edition, not only corrected but liberally recomposed in Beethoven's own hand, and a copy of the first edition itself, containing some but not all of these changes, and also many other alterations which might, or might not, have been yet more afterthoughts of the composer's. . . .

BUT LET US revert to instruments and bowings. "Beethoven certainly didn't compose for the fortepiano: he imagined the sound of the modern grand piano." Really? How does Miss Mutter know? How did *Beethoven* know? Or is it a total coincidence that Messrs Steinway created what Beethoven had silently imagined? Is Miss Mutter not arrogating to herself rather more of the interpreter's insight into the mind of the composer than can easily be tolerated?

There is at least one Beethoven masterpiece that disproves the general applicability of her assertion. The Triple Concerto is devastatingly undervalued, and not just because (like far more of Beethoven's output than the Romantic view of him will readily countenance) it is predominantly cheerful. Played on a modern concert-grand, its keyboard part (written for a talented amateur, the Archduke Rudolf of Austria) sounds thin and puny—not only in relation to the more virtuosic solo string parts (written for professionals) but in relation to our expectations of "modern" piano writing. Played on period instruments, the whole concerto comes together with all its parts on the same conceptual scale, and rises to its proper stature as a result.

Of course, innovative composers make extreme demands on instruments, which lead instrument-makers to introduce modifications—which, in turn, stimulate composers to develop their writing further. But this is a gradual process, which does not involve "imagining the future". When, in the 1930s, Edgard Varese finally became dissatisfied with conventional instruments, he predicted that new ones would eventually be made. He even predicted that they would be electronic. But he did not compose for them. He stopped composing altogether for years, and only began again when some of the new possibilities provided by tape recorders and oscillators (and the like) were made available to him and stimulated his imagination anew.

If Mozart had "imagined" Miss Mutter's Strad and bow in their modern state, and her modern taste, and had composed for them, later editors would not have felt the need to "modernise" his bowings and dynamics. In that case it would not have been necessary for Miss Mutter to go back to the *Ur*-texts. Miss Mutter is as entitled to her position—along the axis stretching from "authentic sounds and styles; insight into an earlier mind and world" to "modern sounds and styles; immediate pleasure, direct relationship to our modern world" —as, I take it, I am to mine. But I do not think she should separate authenticity of *text* from authenticity of instruments and playing styles.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARCHITECTURE

Brown Bread & Glass Fibre

Looking for a New Tradition—By DAVID ANSTIS

WITHIN MY EDITION of J. M. Richards's classic *Introduction to Modern Architecture* (1940) lies the claim that the battle for Modern Architecture had been won. As things turned out, it hadn't. It was more one particular generation's way of looking at and designing architecture that was the victory: aesthetically topical, clearly rational, socially caring, unafraid of new technologies, thorough—and not a little dictatorial. This was the era and the Golden Age of the Masters: Wright, Corb, Mies, and Gropius, who in varying ways filled the architectural vocabulary with new forms and attitudes about architecture. Study materials, said Wright. Study light, said Corb. Study detail, said Mies. Study *properly*, said Gropius . . . merge with the team into a common cause.

Today there is no common cause. Inner city concerns, vital though these must be, are one facet of a much larger social problem that started (in Britain) with the Enclosure Acts and Industrialism: the undermining of the economic foundations which keep a community live, self-respecting, and self-sufficiently prosperous. Architecture can certainly help towards ameliorating the resultant physical conditions, but even that task does not define what architecture is about or what it might be; as some sort of total activity answering a great range of requirements and conditions.

In recent years the buzz-word for architecture has been nicely tolerant: *pluralism*. The diverse. A choice among equals. Had the Victorians used this word, then we would today no doubt be referring to the War of Pluralism, instead of to the War of Styles in which poor Gilbert Scott got embroiled when his neo-Gothic Foreign Office design was compulsorily re-façaded to neo-Classic on the orders of Lord Palmerston. Surely we can detect the same old story today with the National Gallery affair? Re-styling, façadism, over-concern with the superficial, over-reliance on thousands of words of verbal justification, rather than the proof or otherwise of experiencing a real building.

So, apart from offering a range of choices, has pluralism any principle which sustains architecture as an art? I suspect not. For pluralism can also be recognised as the escape-hatch for a lack of commitment and an inability to sort out priorities, whether of utility, performance, or appearance.

One can take any of the visual arts and see that from time to time it can be pursued in such a way that its various examples are regarded as belonging to a characteristic group or "school". (Who cannot recognise an Impressionist painting?) Each individual work is nevertheless unique and, if very good of its kind, may well come to be called a masterpiece. Even within the much maligned art of architecture there are masterpieces; with the post-War ARCON pre-fab, for instance, we would be justified not only in describing it as a minor masterpiece but also, by reason of its mass-production as identical replicas of itself, as a "multiple" work of art. Like a Hockney print—quite a lot of them about, but still a very respectable class of art indeed.

Covering the nation with cloned versions of homely, decorated brick and tile is not quite the same, however. Just like those arrogantly massive geometric grids of public housing schemes, concrete dregs of latter-day cult-Modernism, the new buildings seen here, seen there, and then everywhere, also tend to pall. Although the flavour may be sweeter, the final sensation is also one of boredom, with the attractions virtually confined to the outside surfaces. Not, in this case, multiple masterpieces. Not art through and through. Not risqué, wild, humbling, or daring. Neither making up a thorough-going style (as Gothic was in *all* its aspects) nor presenting us with some unique insight into the mind of an individual designer. It is Brown Bread Building—produced because, like a sepia photograph, it evokes a taste of yesteryear's security, and because it contains certain ingredients, like small windows and twee porches, which, like fibre in the brown loaf, are supposed to be good for us.

No doubt, in a general way, such things are indeed salutary. After all, the outsides of other people's buildings are, for most of us most of the time, all that we are likely to share in, and the introduction of a variety of elements, textures, patterns, and colours does illustrate a move towards a healthy desire to please the eye, away from the over-determinist grey elevational solutions of conformist '60s modernism. But one is reminded of a company which offers each and every mail-order buyer—no matter how many there might be—a choice from a small list of "real oil paintings". A hundred thousand

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of us could end up with an individually crafted *Cat with a Ball* which, for all its hand-applied brush-marked paint, cannot possibly be regarded as a work of art. The technology of the genuine is borrowed, in the hope that you won't notice any loss of artistic message. It fails to be unique, but the very quality of being hand-done instead of a mass-produced print of the one-and-only *Cat with a Ball*, presently lodged with the artist, prevents it from being a "multiple", either.

Alas, thus "genuine" painting! Alas, so often, thus "genuine" new architecture! Distinctive individuality, as eager would-be purchasers of otherwise uniformly identical houses in Nash and John Wood terraces realise full well, is not nearly the same or as good as individual distinction.

NONE THE LESS, and despite the artistic poverty of so much new building, it is not at present very likely that we shall suddenly see one overriding architectural style emerging to form a new glorious tradition for the future. Global travel, colour magazines, media pressure for continual novelty, and the technical ability to change fashions overnight all have their effect.

There is always a thin trickle of the great and the good in architectural design, whereby particular architects like Edward Cullinan or Norman Foster produce some sort of distinctive solution, and a tradition of their own that has the additional merit of being worked out consistently and thoroughly from initial concept to final nail-head. What causes concern is, rather, the generality of architecture: the new commonplace—call it neo-vernacular, neo-pop, post-modernism, neo-historicism, neo-Hi-Tech, or whatever. The diversity of the skin-deep: which reeks of a coloured cardboard montage gummed to some invisible system of angles, bolts and buttresses, or whatever supportive fretwork serves the purpose best. Compared with what architecture practised as an art *can* offer, it is simply not good enough. In fact, it is a problem.

THERE ARE PERHAPS four major aspects to this problem—all interconnected, each deceiving us into believing we have the complete answer when we have only the one strand. First, there are the very substantial limitations which society imposes on the production of buildings, and on what it wants or can simply understand. Patronage. Second, there are the institutions or establishments of architecture which shape the goals of architectural design and its practice, such as the Royal Institute of British Architects, the RIBA. Third, there is the actual machinery of architectural education, which plays an initiating role not only in guiding the aspiring designer in certain directions but also in pressing selected values upon him—what a social anthropologist would call "professional enculturation".

The fourth aspect is possibly the most interesting, because it colours everything else: the refusal of the whole of Modern Architecture, yesterday's style, to go away quietly and die. It won't do so, because a very large part of it just can't. In one way, considered purely as a method of designing buildings to very specific shapes and kinds of appearance, Modern Architecture can indeed be said to have been abandoned—perhaps well before it had been properly tried, refined, stood tests of time, and taught a new generation of architects how to avoid mistakes and stylistic traps like flat roofs in rainy climates. Nevertheless, important underlying and controlling aspects of it persist; they form the real, material framework of much of what is built today, and which in other ways we believe looks so completely different. *Post*-Modernism? Perhaps. . . .

It seems to be a fact that the prophets and theoreticians of the early years of this century laid a much firmer base to our present-day architecture than we are now prepared to admit. They said: "Recognise that all important architectural bits and pieces will one day be produced by the machine. Accept this. Design buildings, like motor-cars or aeroplanes, around the new materials and the standardised manufactured components—doors, windows, sheets of glass, or whatever. The core of the new architecture will inevitably be the technology of mass industrial production."

Admirers of the homely and supportive, of Brown Bread Building, would like to deny this. The interested parties talk seductively, for instance, about "traditionally built" dwellings. They are too embarrassed to mention the hidden steel lintels over the windows, the factory-made and metal-jointed timber trusses in the dark roof, the glass-fibre insulation warming the artificially rusticated brick-faced cavity wall, the factory-standardised kitchen fittings with their cosmetic "Olde-Worlde" clip-on fronts, the "feature staircase" kit of mass-produced neo-Victorian balusters, and so on. All industrialised. And all, as it were, speaking the same design language—if not in the identical vocabulary—as the now despised Modern Movement.

What new, steep-tiled Sussex supermarket, edging its massive bulk around the red-paved pedestrian precinct, is today not built on a steel frame? And, for that matter, which sleek-skinned, clip-on, Pop, curtain-walled, new office blocks have not, lurking within them, the very same structural framework that supports the now despised office blocks that were built on spec 20 years ago? Modern Architecture is in a very real sense *all* our contemporary architectural styles. Only rarely, as in minor examples of revived Classicism, does the technology attempt a true historical return with, for example, small windows corresponding to the need to avoid weakening the massive load-bearing walls in which they are inserted.

THE PUBLIC, however, are not purists. A natural demand for comfort and variety has marked its reaction to the rawly inept and inhospitable examples of amateur Modernism spread large over the country in the last 30 years. And why not? But the public also expects at all times a level of durability and finesse in building that can be very difficult to provide, especially when the variety also desired so often comes in the form of building complexity.

A nice little dormer-window feature on your house roof, for instance, demands expensive skills in plumbing the waterproof lead-flashing around it, extra services in roof carpentry,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and an increased measure of supervision. How many can afford it? How many can afford either, the hand-made clay tiles *à la* Arts & Crafts Domestic Revival to surround that dormer window? Industrialised, standardised, concrete tiles is what most of us will get, and their bright new colours will fade insipidly in just a few years. Is the real problem, perhaps, to create a new style positively *enhanced* by fading tiles? Quite possibly. . . .

As a way of producing an architecture for our day (or what, once, would have been described by those demanding it as a "relevant" architecture), the architect is on the whole challenged if he works either within a radical style of today—what might be called modern—or a style of yesterday. With most of his building projects, he has no option but to consult the trade catalogues and select from their ready-made, machine-produced offerings. Planning constraints inhibit experimentation drastically, and Building Regulations constantly direct designs towards uniform solutions—especially inside the building. Should the designer nevertheless decide to seek old ways of building, he will find that there is no ready supply of craftsmen to draw on. And, more to the point, if he seeks to use an older material he may well discover that, as with stone, it is expensive to the point of being prohibitive; or else, like wood, has changed in quality since its old Edwardian hey-day.

You'd perhaps rather like a modest front-entrance portico, complete with stone Classical columns to park your Porsche in front of? That, today, could be perhaps half the price of someone else's small house—but, on the other hand, it would certainly be cheaply enough done in factory-moulded glass-reinforced plastic, if association with the original thing by appearance alone is enough to satisfy us. As for wood—the old, long-lasting timbers culled from the naturally grown pine forests of America are long gone, in favour of soft, open-fibred, modern-day commercial (but quick to rot) timber. Paint it at your peril . . . preferably treat it with some coloured preservative—but doesn't it then look quite different? Somehow the architect has to decide which building traditions are still apt, and which—because they can no longer be dealt with in the original manner—suggest the need for a new style to absorb, and to aesthetically exploit, the necessary changes. It may disappoint the paying customers, but things aren't what they used to be, and the architectural Garden of Eden truly ended for most of us in 1914.

GIVEN THIS SITUATION, it speaks well for Britain that these small islands should have been a source of architectural example and international fame on and off during the last 40 years. Within the Modernist tradition, there was, at its best, a clarity of intention and honesty of purpose that revealed itself from the design of the major building spaces to that of the minor constructional details. The 1951 Festival Hall, for instance, was really an excellent example of what could be done when money was available for good materials and finishes. It worked; it looked nice; the inside and outside were all of a piece; and it weathered no worse than any of the pre-War, columned, classical-commercial palaces across the river. Even the enormous programme of "system" schools was a kind of triumph—with its flexible design, responding to varying ground conditions, ranging from soggy Southern clay to lurking subterranean coal-mines in the North, as well as to the new teaching methods bent on breaking down the old formal classrooms. In addition, it subscribed, of course, to the almost universally shared view that unlimited sunshine really was a good thing. Smug criticism of "excessive heat gain" and "glare" from the large windows only came in when the children of the drawn faces and rickety legs to be seen in some of the pre-War generations had finally been replaced by the fit, comfortable children of the first Welfare State days.

There still remains the major predicament for the architects of any age: architecture is so much more than merely answering the functional demands or purposes of a building. Architects have to continue to practice an art, and it is unfortunately never quite enough just to serve up a workable product that happily attracts no particular opposition (although nowadays even that is no mean achievement). We look as well for the special quality of integrity—that message which denotes the work of the artist in any medium. A painting's final appearance comes about as the result of the application of consistent intention married to skilled technique; and, similarly, although architecture is such a solid, everyday, and obviously utilitarian thing, its appearance inside as well as out doesn't have to be quite the random or wilful affair that many would otherwise believe.

THERE IS AN overwhelming argument that for the good of our cultural life, architecture should be practised just like any other art. Pluralism may be fine when seen as a treasure-house of choices; but we also require that each individual architectural stylistic choice is pursued thoroughly . . . with commitment; and that we are able to discern that this particular and very specific way of designing is carried to its logical conclusions in a thorough-going, developing tradition of building. If you are indeed to be a reviving Classicist, go and study with really good Classical architects. Relate the climatic aspects of rain and gloom to your weather details and otherwise unsuitably deep Palladian porticos. Work out construction capable of being done by today's workmen, machine tools, and factory products. Exert pressure on the building industry to train the craftsmen your kind of architecture demands, and start lobbying to re-open the stone quarries if need be. Finally, give us architectural wit—but, please, not pale classical pastiche which is over-valued simply because doing Classicism at all is so difficult.

Somewhere, somehow, there has to be clearly visible in the new architecture that we see and use a quality of *unity* so that, slice your building where you will, it is consistent inside, outside, behind, underneath, on top, and in the corners under the stairs. Nowadays, if we don't much like the latest architectural offering for our High Street, and are lucky with our local Council, we and our neighbours may actually get the design changed. At least we will think we have, for the re-designs to placate us usually come trimmed and bumped

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

around on the outside, re-elevated and fresh-faced. Inside, most frequently, remain the same spaces, the same structure, ceiling panels, light fittings, and floor coverings as were proposed before. Good enough a compromise to achieve that goal of neighbourly acceptance, but quite unlikely to produce the minor architectural gem and little masterpiece that passing time and its historians tend to reveal. For this to occur we, as patrons, must actively encourage our architects to work in depth, to take their time, to come back and make alterations during construction, and to pursue style as a live, unfolding tradition in which each new example adds to what has gone before.

There is no doubt that the aggressive but positive conservation movement of the 1960s and '70s has been the saving of this country's towns and villages. Defensive, pseudo-contextual, cosmetic "conservation"—with every new design tailoring its street façade to anything that already stands on either side of it, and offering a regurgitation of the Brown Bread Building variety (so quickly recognised and loved by Planning Committees) in order to silence all possible criticism—is not. We cannot really expect these Committee members to be over-impressed with fresh architectural novelties if they are allowed to continue with their conviction that architecture is just skin-deep, and is made to work by the holding-it-up technology of beams, columns and bricks, and a bunch of practical fellows like engineers. In fact, we also need to change the nature of the architectural discussion, whereby today's historians and critics so often treat style as fashion: seemingly air-brushed from paper design into material form, and applied to taste.

MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, we need specifically to look at where it all begins: with architectural education, and its national control by the centralised professional bodies. In a worthy two-decade rush to "raise standards", to treat architecture more as an intellectually derived discipline and less the applied art it so largely is, education for architects has become over-stretched and over-academic. The admirable intention of liberalising, extending, and informing tends to become, like the well-meaning attitudes embodied in tolerant pluralism, merely the stuff of superficial judgments, uninformed by the learning to be gained from practical experience and from the choices posed by directly confronting the problems of real building. Modern educational schemes frequently confuse the acquisition of a course of specified "knowledge" as equating with architecture itself. They also confuse it with the exercise of scholarship—which it is not, since scholarship rests on the wisdom of learning gained by experienced discernment and individually motivated enquiry.

The centralised management of the whole of architectural education and all of its schools—whether by the RIBA or the Architects Registration Council, and however well-intentioned—is far too restrictive. There is a crying need for different types of schools, both part-time as well as the nowadays conventional full-time, continuous or discontinuous in their curriculum; each one thoroughly pursuing an identifiable, unified approach not so much to architectural education as to the *design* of architecture itself.

It is time to abandon the ludicrously inappropriate secondary school system of structuring the progress of architectural students in the form of bunches of people proceeding *en masse* through the educational machinery at the same rate, year by year, and to look once again at the merits of the old Beaux Arts system, for example, where within stated limits students presented themselves for examination when they were ready, and passed or failed by individually motivated attainment.

Given a real choice of educational routes, and the time and practical experience to test them thoroughly, the following phase would, we may hope, see a new tradition of architectural study and practice which (although perhaps still coming in 57 different stylistic varieties), when considered as a true art, would in its most important respects no longer be soporific and skin deep.

What such new architectural styles will actually look like, none of us could possibly forecast. One thing is for sure: they'll all be *truly* modern.

I. M. Norman Nicholson

Later that day, showers bashing my brolly,
I leant on a slate-jagged bridge
looking at snaky foam, moss-lagged rocks—
just as you might have caught them, years before.
And thought: yours was a good laying down, Norman—
a few handfuls of local sand;
someone you taught flower names sixty years ago
(and the flowers themselves, bluebell, buttercup,
riding your carpentered roof);
a redfaced niece with a convulsive lip, crying;
friends, poets, indistinguishably around;
and bones that were Yvonne's, next door. . . .
yes, a good laying down.

Geoffrey Holloway

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATRE

Country-House Drama

By Edward Pearce

THE HANDLING of great and terrible events on stage is a precarious undertaking. The chance to indulge in bathos and laboured public instruction, Hollywood style—along the lines of "Ah, Émile Zola, our most noted novelist, I want you to meet Captain Dreyfus"—inevitably tempts the playwright.

By choosing to write about Stalin's Politburo, better known to readers of ENCOUNTER and *The Morning Star* than to the general public, David Pinner, in *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* (Gateway, Chester), was taking such a chance. He was also risking the possibility that a play with such subject matter, however well handled, would be without much public appeal. From the rapt and delighted response of a full house and from the inherent merits of the play itself, neither charge is sustainable.

Pinner's account of Stalin's table talk, his gruff and lovable way of terrorising colleagues, themselves "in blood so far that turning were as tedious as go o'er", has gripping immediacy.

The setting is domestic, even cosy. The General Secretary's little daughter pulls a face when she hears that the Politburo are coming to dinner. "What's that, little one?" he says indulgently. "If you don't like them, I can always change them." The piece is rich in such felicities: "We will destroy him as an enemy of the people . . . along with all the other enemies of the people." And Svetlana's words after a comic bout of Russian proverb swapping, hardly break the tension: "And God help the sheep when the wolf is the shepherd."

The play (close to what we know of Stalin's intimate circle from the records *inter alia* of Svetlana and Milovan Djilas) eschews cheap horrors for the suspense of black comedy, the black comedy of everyday life among totalitarian folk. This Stalin has no manic rages. He is the pipe-smoking uncle of wartime Western delusion, and every single member of his entourage lives in daily expectation of death. They respond variously. Molotov retreats into protective administrative greyness; Malenkov is garrulous; Kaganovich moves between despair and the protection of his coarseness; Khrushchev (played rough and north of England as if he sat on Arthur Scargill's executive) has a mixture of calculation and half-decency to see him through, no more incredible, given the bloody work he set his hand to, than the real Khrushchev. Beria alone has a completely psychopathic personality, and is the only one to take liberties in the presence of the great leader, though Zhukov is also shown as an independent spirit who speaks out of turn.

The play, which at no point ceases to fascinate and to hold one's attention, shows Stalin and his entourage at four dinner-table gatherings (which gives it a certain grim affinity with Shaw's *The Apple Cart*)—in 1938, 1943, 1950, and March 1953. Stalin tests his colleagues, family and servants with little frights, terrors proffered and withdrawn. They slink in his presence, caper when his back is turned. Because the curtains have been closed, and the *Partei genossen* are appearing away from their public, the handling of socialism, Lenin, even the sunlike greatness of Stalin himself, is cool. The terrifying Super-Saatchi job of state propaganda is absent, only alluded to in the account of balloons, bearing the fatherly countenance, being released over a grateful mass meeting.

Paradoxically, and Pinner must have realised as much, the effect is to make Stalin interesting, certainly to give him an attraction of a terrible kind among his fearful, cringing, clone-like Ministers. This in many ways is The Prince, the understander of power, the mocker of official pieties, the heir of Lenin's question "Who, whom?", answering "I, anyone!"

At a key moment, Stalin's housekeeper tells him (in best lovable Matryona style) that he has a lucky ladybird on his lapel. Silently, needing no luck and understanding how to deal with such intrusion, Stalin flicks it away. This piece of brilliant business catches the strength of the whole play, a determination when dealing with atrocity and nightmare to use understatement and to comprehend devilry through the febrile, half-drunken normality of men who, through their inhumanity, keep a foot in the human camp.

The politician's desire to please—the masses, the voters, the Church—is innately a funny topic. And there are few things more delightful than the portrait of the young, springy-haired Leonid Brezhnev, as eager to please as a young dog devoted at the heels of Khrushchev, as Khrushchev defers to Stalin—a touch of the apostolic succession. Ironically, Kevin Costello, splendid in that part, doubles as Yezhov, the over-zealous lieutenant, himself purged (like Fouquier-Tinville) at the end of the purges.

THERE IS SOME FORMIDABLE acting on view. Stephen Chase plays Khrushchev as a younger Frank Cousins, and gives him a credible warmth. The vileness of Bill Homewood, giggling, sneering and quite glittering with sexual malice and private antagonism, is worthy of Lavrenti Pavlovich himself. One can see exactly why Djilas and others so loathed Beria. "Take away this serpent", Khrushchev is supposed to have said in 1953.

There is a much quieter but deeply impressive performance as grey, battered, perhaps indulgently depicted Molotov,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from John Cording. High praise should also go to Colin Kaye's hunched and persecuted Poskrebyshev, Stalin's secretary, who endures ferocious horseplay with the prospect (like Malvolio) of being revenged on the whole pack of them. And the two beleaguered women, Anne Leroux and Joanna Bacon, give sound performances as daughter and housekeeper. But surely even feminists will rejoice to think that this is strictly a man's world?

At the heart of the production lies Philip Madoc, a soft-voiced Stalin, mild more often than threatening, but with the authority of a contemptuous intelligence which understands how to handle the reins of power. A little paranoid certainly, but paranoid in a way that is coolly directed at other people so that they can share the feeling. The genial monster is in control, as is Madoc, in a lovely house-commanding performance of a very high order.

Putting aside the enormous importance of simply capturing and encapsulating a terrible progression in human history, the piece itself as straight theatre succeeds by a wide margin. It has command, tension, wit and stylish vigour, enough to demand to be taken very seriously indeed. It is also a piece with direct popular appeal for all its ambition, never slipping into didacticism in the stage assault.

Philip Partridge's high-aspiring management at Chester is to be applauded for discernment as well as courage in mounting a play which calls for production in London and beyond. To understand history so lucidly and to set it out with so firm a bias away from self-indulgence and towards the instincts of the public was masterly. This is a quite outstanding play.

THE WORD "war-horse" is to be avoided. It is patronising and full of facile assumptions. It is to be avoided especially in the case of *Journey's End*, sensitively and intelligently revived at the Whitehall Theatre. The beauty of *Journey's End* is that it is the work of a candid middle-class middle-brow, an insurance-claims adjuster who happened to have served in the trenches.

One sort of prejudice was against it when it was struggling for a hearing in 1928—an outsider's work, too gloomy, would never hold a commercial audience. Today, one might fear the apprehensions of those who get their anti-war message from Brecht and his successors and who will be shocked by R. C. Sherriff's middle-class decencies. In fact, the spectator is impressed by his ability to be moved and hurt by the men in the dug-out in 1918: Raleigh, the idealistic public school silly ass; Osborne, the slightly older and thus ineffably older officer. Their deaths matter: not just as examples of the inexpressible annihilatory waste of the First World War, but because their own aspiration to be "decent chaps" has been perfectly fulfilled. Death may or may not be a leveller, but the proximity of death allows one to accept people by their own criteria. Class and time and the unreal purity of trench speech (not an expletive in two hours under the German guns), none of them matters. This is a depiction which sounds like truth to the successor generation. *Journey's End* expands upon Sassoon's lines ("Dreamers", 1917):

Soldiers are citizens of death's grey land,
Drawing no dividend from time's to-morrows. . . .
I see them in foul dug-outs—gnawed by rats,
And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain
Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,
And mocked by hopeless longing to regain
Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,
And going to the office in the train.

Justin Greene's production is proficiently done, with a proper, straightforward devotion to the text. The humour of Mason, the cook-soldier with his onion-flavoured tea, is triumphantly portrayed by Peter Waddington, a young actor whose comic-pathetic potential is likely to move centre stage. Nicky Henson as "Uncle" Osborne is wonderfully sane and soothing, an English notion of the English seen to best advantage. As for the star part of Stanhope, drinking all that cold tea under stress, Jason Connery has a young man's authority which could send boys of 20 off-stage to slaughter.

One watches *Journey's End* with something more than respect. 60 years after the first Stage Society one-night production, 70 years after the events, it quietly relates the progression of innocent men to death. The elder ones with resigned knowledge, the young with the look of boyish excitement not erased by the cannon-fire which took them in the spine. *Journey's End* outlives fashion because it tells a tale without device and leaves us certain that this is the truth.

AFTER THE DREARY horrors of *The Tutor*, it is agreeable to see the Mirvish management staging that godmother of Monty Python, *One Way Pendulum* by N. F. Simpson (Old Vic). Alas, the programme is stuffed with the sort of sham erudition associated with Jonathan Miller, the director—invocations of Thomas Aquinas, Meister Eckhart and Spinoza to make us respectful—and the foyer was packed with '60s great folk 25 years on. Simpson's play is first-draft, upper echelon, television absurdism; very funny in places and a touch worn in others. There is no need to accept prescriptive opinions. It is a game of inconsequences which deliberately runs the flag further up than there is pole to take it, letting wittering barristers pursue their indignation and rhetoric over hill and down pit shaft.

It must have been a glittering exhibit in 1962, when sending up the suburban home was considered far-out and Margaret Thatcher was parliamentary under-secretary to the Ministry of Pensions. But it comes across now as slightly precious, just the thing for clever people to share together—but actually only as good as it is funny, which is only some of the time. A proficient cast led by Brenda Bruce did well enough but there is something about the presence of John Fortune and John Bird, admirable in their way, to suggest vanished shows and "That Was the World That Was." Kathryn Pogson as the young Sylvia Groomkirby must feel herself blessed by patriarchs and apostles. *One Way Pendulum* is more important as theatrical history than as a piece which gives unconditional enjoyment. Oddly, it wears less well than *Journey's End*.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

"Shoah" as Film

I HAD NOT GIVEN thought to whether *Shoah* was a "good film" until I read Edward Rogerson's to my mind stunning misreading of the film ("Movies & Metaphysics", ENCOUNTER, April 1988). Certainly it was an experience which changed me, and to that extent it was, in my terms, a dramatic success. Of course, it was flawed. Much of Part II was repetitive, and I would have been inclined to cut much of it (and, perhaps, to have put the remaining hour or so into Part I, making one long film with an intermission).

I disagree that the flaws were in the method and motivation. Exploitation of interviewees? Perhaps all interviewers exploit their subjects, in that they impose their own egos on the personalities of people who are just trying to live their lives. But nobody has to be interviewed.

The most powerful point which the film made to me was the failure of language; the way in which words had been cut adrift from meaning in order to make the Extermination Camps possible. This was reinforced by the visual emphasis on empty spaces and green fields, which forced one to imagine the bones beneath. Almost like radio with pictures. The Nazis seemed to have grasped the importance of wresting the language away from the reality when they devised a system of never actually referring to the Jews as people.

WHERE Rogerson sees Claude Lanzmann's "obsession with all the details of deportation and mass murder" as trivialising, the emphasis on the bureaucratic and administrative aspects as shying away from ideological discussion, I saw the opposite. To reduce human beings to units and cargo on freight-paperwork, to talk of heavy loads when you mean people crammed like battery-chickens into gas-vans, is shocking. All the more so because one recognises this device as an evil relation of current phraseology: Intelligence organisations "taking people out"; multinationals "de-hiring" (or "letting people go"); "income support" for people who have no income save that support. As with psychotics, the error is to see them as totally other, rather than on an elasticated continuum this or that distance from us.

Having to grapple with interviews in one language, translated into another, with subtitles in another, reinforced the sense of there being a wall which kept language out—if you spoke all the languages in the world, you would still not be able to convey what happened. Of that which we cannot speak, we must struggle to embrace by some other means.

Rogerson knows the Poles well. I am probably somewhere in between him and the typical viewer, in that I have had Polish friends and acquaintances. But *Shoah* has not made me feel differently about either the Polish in general or those I have met over the years. The world is full of unintelligent bigots, some of whom turned out to be callous Poles. After Part I, I had nightmares about one of the more breathtakingly unfeeling interviewees; but my disturbance was as much because I've worked with people like that. English people. Put a concentration camp in the Lake District—or in the Kentucky mountains—and you would find people who would accept and justify it. I could have told you this in terms of psychological theory before I saw *Shoah*, but I had never realised it on an emotional level before.

JACQUELINE CASTLES

London

George Steiner's Reply

On Lewis Feuer's "Stoicism"

LEWIS FEUER's advocacy of classical rationalism and positivism in the face of Auschwitz is poignant ("Confronting Evil & Its Unreason", ENCOUNTER, May 1988). It does not, I believe, come anywhere near the decisive difficulties.

The analogy between what numerous survivors of and thinkers on the Shoah have felt to be the utter inadequacy of humane discourse in reference to the Auschwitz-world and the protests of Job, adduced by Professor Feuer, breaks down very precisely. Job receives God's answer. That answer may entirely transcend our mortal categories of distributive equity; but it is overwhelmingly a proof of God's interest in Job's torment. There was *no* such answer in the land and time of the gas-ovens. In a way possibly analogous with kabbalistic speculations, it was—it is—as if God Himself had been made speechless.

I HAVE NEVER questioned for a moment that "mathematical language" has its function in regard to the scale of massacre. But the comparisons and relativisations which it inevitably induces are almost obscenely impertinent (in the dual sense of that term). Stalin murdered more human beings than Hitler. Pol Pot murdered more rapidly, and live burial is hardly preferable to gassing. But these parallels, which *must* be pondered, do not cast light on the systematic "ontology" of the Holocaust; that is to say, on the Nazi decision to judge guilty and open to extermination, millions of human beings defined by the sole fact of their *being* (to *be* a Jew). And even if we choose to consider as interrelated the hideous mass-murders of recent times, the inference of a theological-metaphysical perception may remain entirely valid. It is from the utter failure of Enlightenment rationalism and positivist meliorism of the 19th century—such as Lewis Feuer represents it—either to foresee or to prevent the modern descent into the inhuman, that my argument starts.

ARE JEWS "a traumatised, crazed people?" challenges Feuer. Generalisations ought to be avoided even where a case had to be concisely put; and I do not want to quibble semantically. But let me say this. I had always taken the definition of the Jew to be that of a man and a woman who so educated their children that these children *could* never, *would* never, bury any other human being alive, *whatever* the provocation, *whatever* the stakes (including survival). I was wrong. And "crazed" does not seem to me wholly inapposite to the measure and consequences of that error.

Professor Feuer simply does not try to meet the evidence in the Pauline epistles and early Christendom. To Paul (himself so ambiguously a Jew), the Jew's refusal to receive the very Messiah predicted, imaged, sung in the Psalms and the Prophets, constituted an irrecusable crime. It doomed not only the Jews. It condemned the rest of mankind to the treadmill and agony of history by postponing (for ever, perhaps?) the coming of salvation. The power of Paul's metaphoric finding is enormous; it is with us today, albeit in symbolic and internalised forms. It is the recurrent incapacity of positivism and old-style rationalist historicism to take such forms into account which has so trivialised the great mass of sociological, economic, political, inquiries into the roots and nature of the Shoah.

TODAY, in a period of matchless energies and information, in a period in which the rationalist hopes that general education and the dissemination of knowledge would humanise man, torture has again become endemic and massacres proliferate. The hypothesis that these reversions in the midst of highly-developed societies are related to the eclipse of certain theological and metaphysical categories, is not far-fetched. An attempt to re-examine the metaphors of guilt and of retribution at work in the individual and the social sub-conscious—and to grasp why these metaphors turn venomous when they no

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

longer enact a felt belief—may be of use.

I do see the dignity of Professor Feuer's "stoic outlook". But too often, stoicism has shaded into impotence or indifference, or both.

GEORGE STEINER

Cambridge

"Dépaysé" in the USA?

IN *M*'s COLUMN in the April issue of ENCOUNTER, he writes about feeling *dépaysé* on his visits to the USA, largely due to:

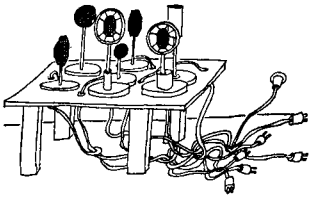
> "minor matters: the small space given to foreign stories in the newspapers; the absence of offal—liver, hearts, kidneys—from American menus; the piped music in elevators; the carnival clothes worn by the old gentlemen on holiday; the enormous distances Americans will drive to a cocktail party; the hard drinking before luncheon, followed by water at table; the dearth of decent bookshops and the ubiquity of the week's best-sellers'; the virtual impossibility of 'going for a country walk.' And, capping it all, the uncomprehending condescension of many Americans when a European remarks on such things."

May I join the chorus of "uncomprehending condescension"? But before I do, may I be allowed to wonder where and when *M* has visited this country? Not a mile from where I write these lines it is possible to get offal (which our catering profession euphemistically calls "variety meats") at an elegant restaurant, dedicated—appropriately—to the late Duchess of Windsor. On the way *M* could stop at a bookshop which is fully the equal to anything I have seen on Charing Cross Road, and certainly superior to what is available in most British provincial towns. I could direct him to some others, quite extraordinary, in such unlikely places as Cleveland, Ohio, or Portland, Oregon. There is plenty of foreign news in the *New York Times, The Washington Post*, and *The Wall St. Journal*, two of which are available on the same day through the miracle of satellite retransmission and regional printing plants in every city, large and small, across this continent.

It has been more than a decade since I have sat down to any luncheon here in Washington or even in Indianapolis or Detroit, where wine was not served. (While hard drinks are usually offered beforehand, the style is decidedly towards lighter aperitifs; business and government alike now frown on hard

The Overkill of "the M-Bomb"

New York City



OVERKILL is our style. "Everything to excess", we reply to the Athenians' "Everything in moderation". The spirit of the day, until Wall Street turned into Sucker's Alley, was expressed in the Yuppie's Creed: "I want it all, and I want it now." Now we are beset by excesses of piety. Sermons about the evil of greed pour from press, screen and tube. Where were those scourgers of greed when we needed them to stay the obnoxious hordes baying, "Want it all, want it now"?

In a well-ordered society there is a place for greed. It provides a rich source of literature and drama. It helps drive the marketplace. Its existence sustains the moralist with audiences that need his moralisings. It spices the blandness of society with corruption, farce and the spectacles of great men crashing and of thieves falling out.

OUR TASTE FOR OVERKILL **seems limitless. Look at the media. And I don't mean press and television. Media is a singular phenomenon, and we might as well face it. It is born of press and television, but is singularly distinct from press and television.**

Like tetchy Plutonium or Uranium-235, which are born of commonplace and stolid Uranium-238, media is the dangerous offspring of modern press and television. Its power is now so extensive that press and television can no longer control it.

For illustration of how media can make the rubble bounce, consider the Iowa caucuses and the recent Super Bowl. What is extraordinary about these events is not their triviality, nor even that press and television have covered them as though they were earth-shaking events. Press and television have always covered small events as though they were vital.

THE ESSENCE *of news coverage was touched upon some years ago in somebody's definition of: A columnist . . . a person afflicted by the dreary nature of his business with the necessity of finding significance three times a week in events of no consequence.*

The definition also describes press and television reporting. So what is remarkable about the overkill on Iowa and the Super Bowl is not the excessive coverage accorded them, but the spectacle of press and television people using their space and time to tell us how trivial these events are.

The Super Bowl entrepreneurs know how to make it tempting for press and TV people to shill for the football business, too. The game is usually scheduled in a warm-weather garden spot. Come January, reporters have always been quick to discover good stories in southern latitudes. Until media was born, though, the news people made strenuous efforts to pretend there really was a story down there under those palm trees.

NOT ANYMORE. **After a while I lost count of the number of columns, news stories and TV fragments in which reporters and columnists talked about the absurd public-relations trap in which they were caught at San Diego.**

They seemed to feel they were conspiring to make the public think something important was happening. Almost as much material has come out of Iowa about how silly it is to ascribe importance to those caucuses.

THEN WHY DO THEY *descend on Iowa and San Diego if they're not even going to pretend they're covering earth-shaking events? So much shamed head-shaking, so many admissions that they feel like conspirators in schemes to deceive the public about the true nature of things. What's happened to press and TV people? In the old days they at least tried to fake it.*

Media is what's happened. It is a thing, a monstrous thing no one quite understands. It alights here, there, San Diego, Iowa. Press and TV cannot oppose it. They created media, but now it bullies them, commands them, treats them with contempt.

They can only complain about loss of control. It is the size of the thing, the thing's astonishing power that troubles them. Media is the creator of overkill. It scares those it is using in San Diego, in Iowa.

Russell Baker

in the NEW YORK TIMES

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

drinking at the luncheon hour.) I myself loathe the country, so I never look for country in which to walk, but not an hour from here is the Shenandoah Valley, where there are many lovely places through which one can wander. As for driving extraordinary distances to cocktail parties, this could only be true if one lived in Los Angeles or Texas—unless, of course, *M* thinks that a half-hour in the automobile is a transpolar expedition.

Although Americans still dress rather preposterously on holiday—even when they come here to Washington—a number of us have had it drilled into our heads that this is not the done thing in Europe, and *M* can expect that we will all look as dull and uncomfortable as British tourists any day now.

Of course, he is right that Europe and America are different. I always thought that the purpose of travel was to mark and even revel in such differences, rather than to mildly deplore them, or to make invidious comparisons. But in any event, he should bring his clichés a bit up to date. I invite him to a drink (not whisky), and a disgusting meal of offal at Mrs Simpson's restaurant on his next visit to Washington so that we can put matters to rights. My treat.

MARK FALCOFF

Washington D.C.

M WRITES: Thanks for the offer (offal?) and the deserved rebuke. Things have obviously changed in the decade since my last long visit. But when I was a visiting professor at Chicago, I *did* have to drive two hours to a party; I *did* find only one good second-hand bookshop; it *was* very hard to take a country walk. And the foreign news—even in the papers quoted—is still very sparse by European standards. But no sweat: I like America too.

Critical Dissent

LAST NIGHT I read Melvin J. Lasky's "Cycles of Western Fantasy" (ENCOUNTER, February). I am a Dutch journalist, and have travelled for the past 17 years to and from the USSR. In 1982 I wrote a book with Georgi Arbatov on "Soviet Foreign Policy".

I most emphatically take your approach to this group-fantasy about "Gorby" and all the nonsense that's surrounding this latest Communist reformer and adventurist. Your analysis is the one most needed now in gullible America. We have indeed heard about reforms in steady cycles for 70 years. I have recently reread Khrushchev's 1960 remarks, speeches, press-conference material (when I was stationed at the UN as a foreign correspondent). Does anyone remember that Mr K (perhaps less "cultivated" than Mr G) went much further in many ways than this chap does? People have no memories—how, then, to explain this euphoria about Gorbachov? (*Time* magazine's Man-of-the-Year, just because he granted them a propaganda coup.) Thank you for the critical dissent from the climate of opinion.

WILLEM OLTMANS

Amsterdam

Bell, Epstein

IN ATTEMPTING to understand the motive behind Professor Bell's gratuitous letter (ENCOUNTER, June) I fear that I must once again have recourse to childish things. Specifically, I have in mind the childish and sentimental regard for Socialism that Professor Bell acquired when a boy and to which, now in his late 60s, he apparently continues to cling. Perhaps my article ("Farewell to Utopia", ENCOUNTER, April 1988) offended the socialist in Bell. But whatever the true reason for his querulousness, surely he would have done better to have stated it plainly, so that we might have argued about it. Instead—and regrettably—he has chosen to let fly with a letter displaying the altogether unpleasant combination of petty erudition and unfocused animus.

JOSEPH EPSTEIN

Evanston
Illinois

The Old "Afrikaner" Mission?

THE CLAIM OF my classics professor that the Afrikaner saw "Macedonian and Roman parallels" to the mission of his people in South Africa mystified me at first as much as it does Dan Jacobson (Letters, ENCOUNTER, April) but I have since learned what was meant.

For the Macedonian parallel, Professor Haarhoff must have been referring to Alexander's prayer at Opis, that (to quote Tarn)

> "all peoples of his Empire might be partners in the commonwealth (not merely subjects), and that the peoples of the world he knew might live together in harmony and in unity of heart and mind—that *Homonoia* which for centuries the world was to long for but never reach. . . ."

The Roman allusion might have been to that flexibility of mind (before the Church took over) that makes Lecky say, "it is probable that at no other period in the history of the world was speculative freedom so perfect as in the Roman Empire. . . ." But what Haarhoff was chiefly thinking of must have been the corporate philosophy of the Stoics that inspired Marcus Aurelius to write:

> "I am part of a whole . . . [and] a certain intimate connection prevails between myself and my kindred parts. In much the same way . . . we conceive every member of the state a happy man, when he goes on his way doing good to his fellow-citizens and welcoming every dispensation of the commonwealth."

This influenced the holism of Smuts (whom I take to represent the classic, European quality in Afrikaner thought), when he wrote Article 30 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for the United Nations in 1948:

> "Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of the rights and freedoms set forth herein."

It is a long way from nobility of thought to nobility of practice—even Thomas Jefferson kept slaves. The 1948 election sacked Smuts and his way of thinking and, in a post-War wave of Bible-punching populism, introduced the long lunacy of apartheid. A new generation of Afrikaners is now in charge, though, and it is among them that I sense (always tending to look on the bright side) a strengthening of the pre-1948 vision and pragmatism.

THE RACIAL PROBLEMS of the South African political scene are unique in their complexity—America's are a fleabite to ours—and it's going to be one hell of a balancing act to get them all together. At this late stage, I, as an Englishman, would rather put my faith in the European inheritance and leadership of the dominant group here—if I have appraised it rightly—than the frankly half-witted ideologies of the Churches, the Communists, or the Democratic Party in the United States.

I apologise to Dan Jacobson for having magnified a flick of the pen in his amusing article ("In a Lost Language", July-August 1987) into such a diatribe. But the constructive and hopeful spirit in South Africa—among all races—is depressed as much by thoughtlessness and ignorance as by the clamour of the ideologists.

PHILIP BIRKINSHAW

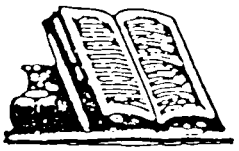
Grahamstown
South Africa

PRINTED IN GREAT GRITAIN BY
Thamesmouth Printing Group,
17-21 Hovefields Avenue, Basildon, Essex

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Life & Letters Today

San Francisco



MUCHO MACHO: *The 11th international Ernest Hemingway Parody competition was recently held at Harry's Bar and American Grill in San Francisco, and the standard was as high as ever.*

Hemingway has been dead for 27 years but his clipped, macho style still attracts a loyal readership. The judges in the Parody competition were looking for all aspects of the Hemingwayesque to be reproduced, with special attention to bad puns and clichés.

The winning entry, by an Alaskan English teacher, began in robust style:

> *"It was now morning and he was in the bathroom shaving, shaving for the first time that day but not the last, no never the last: the hairs kept coming, tiny hairs and black and there was nothing for it, nothing for it at all but shaving razor bright edge clean on skin and cutting through the hairs and the soap and the dead-dried cells of epidermis. . . ."*

The old man of American prose would surely have approved.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

MEANINGFUL: **Sir, I recently observed the legend "Access Control and Security Specialists" displayed by a firm hitherto content to be known as locksmiths.**

"High and Difficult Access Inspection Service" I interpreted as offering the help of a steeplejack.

Although I may own a Subsoil Access and Inspection Implement, I shall continue to call it a spade.

THE TIMES

California

MAKE MINE MANHATTAN: *I suspect that I am not the only person in the world who has found him or herself in the middle of a dinner party suddenly wondering what on earth was going on [writes Geoffrey Beattie]. One linguist who has shed some light on this matter is Deborah Tannen, from Georgetown University. She did this by taking to pieces one particular dinner party, which she attended and taped—a Thanksgiving dinner, involving six people held in Berkeley, California.*

Three of the participants were native New York Jews. Four were male, two female. There were two brothers; the rest were friends of varying degrees of acquaintance. Three of the participants were heterosexual; three were homosexual. There were two musicians, two writers, and two connected with universities (with some overlap between these categories). A mixed group of middle-class Americans, with one lone Londoner present, and plenty of leeway for different groups to form.

The New Yorkers, it turned out, entirely dominated the conversation from beginning to end. New Yorkers, it seems, expect shorter pauses between speakers' turns at talk than most other people. Those not from New York reported that they had, in fact, trouble getting a word in edgewise. The three New Yorkers said nearly twice as much as the other three (17,759 words compared with 9,075 words to be exact). Deborah Tannen—one of the New Yorkers—said most of all, and contributed nearly nine times as much as the other female present—the Londoner, who said least of all.

NEW SOCIETY

Brussels

SOLOMON BINDING: **With some astonishment, NATO circles here took note of the German translated versions of the recent resolutions agreed to by the "North Atlantic Summit". The up-shot of the meeting of the Governmental leaders (including President Reagan, Prime Minister Thatcher, and Chancellor Kohl, among others) was that it was necessary, and indeed urgent, to modernise the West-European defences by keeping them "up-to-date". The German translation evaded the meaning and intent by translating it as: keeping the forces "*auf dem gebotenen Stand*" (to the required level). In another resolution referring to the modernisation of both nuclear and conventional forces, the German translation uses the correct rendering of "*auf den neuesten Stand*".**

West-German Foreign Minister Genscher, in his briefing of "informed sources", had suggested that it was not German policy to "modernise" existing NATO forces in the nuclear field. Correspondents considered the forthcoming elections in the West-German republic (already upset enough after the previous round of "modernisation" and "up-dating" with the now-cancelled US Pershings and Cruises) as playing a factor in the shifting scenario.

In any case, German is not an official NATO language. Only the French and English texts are "solemn and binding".

DIE WELT

London

BRITISH ACCENTS: *Lord Marshall of Goring, the Electricity Board's Chief, does not like to lose.*

It happened only once before, when Anthony Wedgwood Benn, then Energy Secretary, sacked him as chief scientific adviser in 1977. He never forgot.

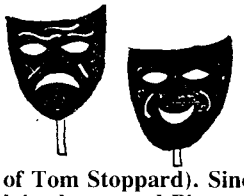
Now that Mr Cecil Parkinson has won Cabinet approval to split up the "Central Electricity Generating Board" in exactly the way Lord Marshall declares will endanger the supply, he can expect no quarter from the forceful son of a Cardiff baker.

One thing about Lord Marshall that puzzles everyone—and annoys many—is his accent, a curious Welsh-East European hybrid.

His theory is that when he was reading mathematical physics at Birmingham University his tutors were mainly East Europeans who had fled Hitler, and he unconsciously absorbed their accents.

DAILY MAIL

New York City



ILLEGALITY: **Eight Northwestern University graduates, all drama majors, plopped down in New York. The first play they put on was Harold Pinter's "Dumbwaiter" (they got the rights by lying and identifying themselves as associates of Tom Stoppard). Since it was only a one-acter they purloined a second Pinter one-acter, "The Lover". Both productions went on in the "No Smoking Playhouse" on 45th Street; and they didn't sell tickets. They charged the whole production to a Visa credit card. They also mounted "Heart of a Dog" by Mikhail Bulgakov. "It's not often you find a Russian farce that's only an-hour-and-a-half. Usually, just the names are an-hour-and-a-half. . . ."**

"We called ourselves the Lagelli Theatre", they said. "That's illegal spelled backwards."

NEW YORK TIMES

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Always something novel from Chicago

Recent additions to the Phoenix Fiction Series

By Arthur A. Cohen

ACTS OF THEFT

Centering on a spectacular theft of pre-Columbian treasure in modern Mexico, this is "a detective story with a real detective and a real thief—and yet all the while it is the mind that is being plundered of its own rights."—Cynthia Ozick

IN THE DAYS OF SIMON STERN

The tale of a man's progress from poverty in New York's Lower East Side to real estate riches and the building of a refuge for Holocaust survivors. "A majestic work of fiction... A masterpiece."
—*Commonweal*

A HERO IN HIS TIME

This story of a Russian Jewish minor poet who becomes embroiled in a KGB operation in New York is "a tour de force."—Geoffrey Wolff, *New York Times Book Review*
"A rich compound of high seriousness and robust comedy."
—*Newsweek*

By Richard Stern

GOLK

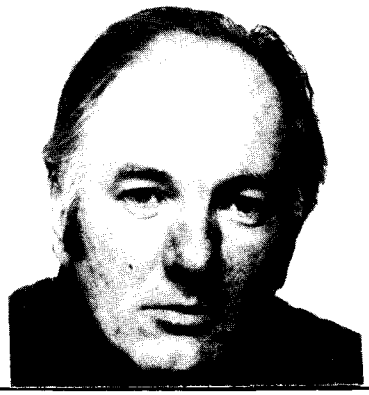
"*Golk* is a rich and marvelously detailed novel by a man with a cultivated intelligence; it is also the first really good book I have read about television."
—Norman Mailer
"An original: sharp, funny, bitter, intelligent, rare."
—Joan Didion, *National Review*

By Thomas Bernhard

"One of the masters of contemporary European fiction."—George Steiner

THE LIME WORKS

This tale of a murder and the bizarre, obsessive life that led to it "is a jungle of meaning, the opposite of simple allegory, and a major achievement."—William Kennedy, *The New Republic*



GARGOYLES

The narrator and his father, a doctor on his daily rounds, travel through forbidding mountainous country calling on a succession of grotesque characters. "Here is a novelist with uncommon talents of the sort possessed by Kafka, Musil, and Beckett."—Robert Mauret, *Saturday Review*

For information on these, or on any of the thousands of our other books in print, write to:
126 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SD, or to:
5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637, U.S.A.

The University of Chicago Press

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED